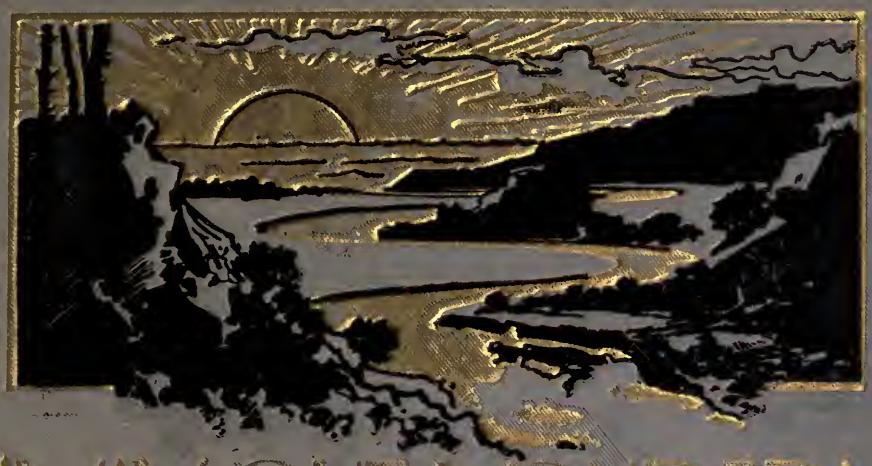
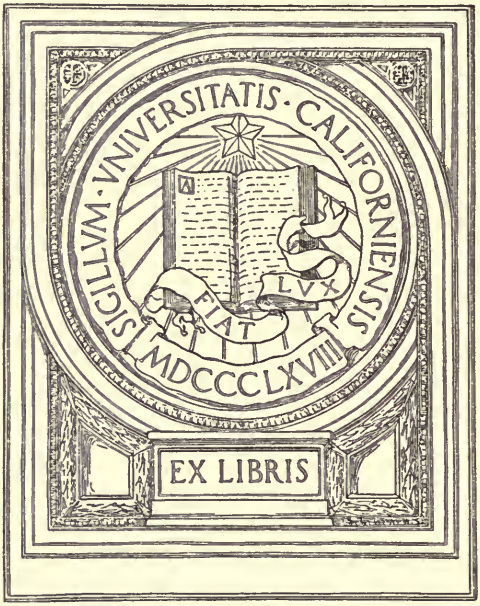


'WAY OUT YONDER!

BY

William Lightfoot Visscher

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AT LOS ANGELES



ROBERT ERNEST COWAN

For
Mr. L. Frank Baum.

With the compliments of
Wm. Lightfoot Visscher.

My Dear Baum.

This book does not expire to be a great novel. In writing it - I desired to tell, truthfully, of the rise and fall of a "boom" town, as I saw it, - and simply hang that narrative on the thread of the little story.

Affectionately
Will Visscher

Chicago
Nov 30
1898.

'WAY OUT YONDER

THE ROMANCE OF A NEW CITY

BY

WILLIAM LIGHTFOOT VISSCHER

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

OPIE READ

ILLUSTRATED

"The truth that is found in fiction
is the truest truth that exists."

CHICAGO
LAIRD & LEE, PUBLISHERS
1898

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DEDICATION

This volume is inscribed, with the warmest feelings of comradeship, to my dear friend and whilom fellow journalist,

CHARLES WOODWORTH,
of Tacoma, Washington.

W.th sincerest wishes that wealth, health and happiness may be his.

THE AUTHOR.

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INTRODUCTION.

The Puget Sound country is romantic without being old. Unlike the mining regions of the flat and ruder West, Puget Sound was born civilized. The country was settled by the finest representatives of American manhood. In a club organized in a new town there were counted more than two hundred university men. The sharp fusilade of a street fight, the terror of the average new West, here gave place to the mellow accents of a Greek tragedy. The oratory of the "Seven Hills" found a new home at the base of a great mountain. It is but natural that out of this country should come a novel; and to me it is also natural that the lead should be taken by William Lightfoot Visscher. His long training as a writer, his fervid fancy, his insight into character, his warm imagination, fit him ably for the work.

OPIE READ.

PREFACE

If this book does not, of itself, interest those who take it up, certainly a preface would not compel an interest. Hence this is merely the form of such an introduction.

However, it may not be out of the way to remark that the story contained herein is presented under the garb of fiction wherewith to clothe some interesting facts, past and present — facts that are stranger than fiction — and attempts to give the atmosphere of a region and its conditions, that have not been considerably exploited in romance.

W. L. V.

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'WAY OUT YONDER.

CHAPTER I.

Duncan's Cove.

Hurrah for the land of the setting sun!
Hurrah for the state of Washington!
Hurrah for the men and women and all
Who came to make the forest fall!
Hurrah for every pioneer
Who built his humble cabin here!

—*Washington!*

At anchor on the bosom of a broad and hospitable bay on the American Pacific coast, one bright June morning a very few years ago, lay a clean and graceful brigantine.

Within a stone's throw from the vessel was the wide entrance to a picturesque cove that was shaped like a horseshoe. It was about half a mile wide between the calks of the shoe, so to speak. A gray, gravelly beach extended more than half way 'round the cove, beginning at the right. Further toward the left the shore became a terrace for a few hundred feet, then toward its left ex-

tremity the bank rose in a solid bluff of stone almost as regular as ruble masonry, with here and there a shelving indentation against which the easy swells of the blue water broke with rhythmic beat, as if that was their never-ending business, as indeed it was, for those same swells are breaking there yet, in just that manner, and will probably continue at it indefinitely.

Other swells in that vicinity have broken for good and all.

Landward, as far as the eye could reach, was a dense, tangled, primeval and mighty forest of great cedars, towering firs and tall tamaracks, with a few cottonwoods and other deciduous trees, that, with still lighter undergrowth, of vine and briar, made a veritable jungle. It was a vast green and brown foreground to a range of mountains at the back; and high over all, white mantled and inexpressibly imposing, towered a regal monarch among the sierras. The great forest undulated in conformity with the earth, its mounds, its valleys, its gulches, canyons and foothills, until the woods reached the timberline on the mountain side, twenty miles or more away.

The scene on the landward side of the brigantine was broken at the shore by an attempt at a small wharf, built

upon a few irregular piles; and immediately beyond the wharf, was a clearing of perhaps two hundred feet square. On this, near the water's edge at high tide, stood a small, badly constructed and dilapidated log cabin, with two or three outhouse shacks that harmonized in their rudeness, roughness and general tumble-down character with what, by a strain, might be called the main building.

About sunrise on the morning in question, on the deck of the vessel, among a few other men, a part of the crew of the brigantine, stood two persons who, from their dress and manner, were evidently men of affairs in the great, busy world, and both appeared to be of good fortune, as well.

Two men of greater differing characteristics and positions in life, however, could not have been found among the respectable element of the city in which they lived, and yet they had many interests in common, in widely differing ways, and they were mutual friends withal.

One, a stocky, sturdy, bearded and determined-looking man of about fifty, dressed in brown beaver clothes of a business cut and a silk hat, was Newton Morse, a millionaire who had earned every dollar of his vast fortune by hard work and honest enterprise. He had started out

in life, early in his "teens," as a railway brakeman, forced to so hard a calling before receiving a school education beyond "the three R's," by dire necessity. He was born poor, and his poverty had been inherited through a line of descent further back than he had been able, or even cared, to trace his genealogy. Advancing step by step in his chosen calling; careful of his earnings; always possessed of the most rugged health, which, together with his strict integrity, good common sense and bull-dog tenacity, made up the remainder of his inheritance, he became, at thirty years of age, a sub-contractor and afterward a sole contractor in building railroads, and thus, without going into details here, his wealth could be accounted for.

His companion was a wiry, dark-skinned man of thirty-five or forty. The dress of this individual was as good or better than that of Morse as to quality, but readily betokened the difference in his character. The trousers were of a black and white, small-checked pattern, the vest and coat of black tricot—the latter of "Prince Albert" cut—and his hat was a soft felt, as broad-brimmed as a sombrero. There was apparently something of the artist about this man, and yet he was

not painter, poet, sculptor or actor, professionally, but bohemian enough to be a little of either, or all. Literature was his art, and yet he was an enthusiastic man, active, enterprising, energetic, ever-sanguine, self-reliant, and yet wanting in self-valuation. This last characteristic had barred his way to wealth, while others, less capable, and in the same line, had grown "well-to-do," all around him. The former qualities had always provided facilities by which he had earned a good livelihood, and could be counted on to do that so long as he was young enough to work at his calling. Together, all the characteristics mentioned as his, were just the combination necessary for his success in making fortune and fame for the ambitious among his friends who chose to manage him for such ends. This was Howard Van Waters.

These two men came up to the main deck of the brigantine together, and after some exclamations of delight from Van Waters, expressive of his easy, and to be expected appreciation of the strong scene before them, Morse quietly remarked:

"I have bought three hundred acres of land right there."

"Who in heaven's name owned it before you?" queried Van Waters.

"Duncan, the squatter, there."

"And what are you going to do with it?"

"I am going to build a city here."

"Oh, you are!"

"Yes, and you are going to help me."

"Am I? Well, I'm glad to hear that, and a little more astonished at it than at what you say you are going to do. But I suppose you know all about it."

"I ought to know. I have been figuring on this thing for the last four years; have had men cruising the region during nearly all of that time; have been here frequently myself—"

"Oh, that's where you have been slipping—"

"Don't interrupt me—and I know what the resources of this country are. I'll tell you all the particulars after breakfast—"

"Suit yourself. Any time will do me."

"But, in the rough, I will just say to you now that those hills are full of coal and iron; those mountains are full of gold, silver and lead; these forests are full of the best timber in the world; this harbor is—"

"Full of fish, I suppose, and—"

"Yes, sir; and you are full of interruptions—probably other things—but I was going to say that this harbor is the best one on the Pacific coast. Its area of holding ground—"

"Float the navies—"

"Dry up!"

"No; Does it?"

"Its area of holding ground is greater; it is safer from storms; the resources of its shores are more opulent, and it is nearer to the open sea than any other on this coast possessing the same advantages. Here is the place for a great city."

"All right, we'll build it. A great man once said, 'A first-class hotel, a first-class theatre, and a first-class newspaper, will rally a city about them in the wilderness.' This seems to be sufficient of a wilderness to test the matter."

"We'll **have** all of them and more, too. Railroads and coal-bunkers, iron smelters, saw-mills—we'll have the whole thing—hello; here's the major."

"Seems there are some minors also. The population

has already begun to increase. Who are those beings, Morse?"

"That old codger pushing off the canoe is Duncan, the small fry are his half-breed children, the old squaw is his 'kloochman,' and the party in the canoe with Duncan is Major Stamina, my agent, and when he gets here I'll show you a boomer—in fact—I'll show you one before he gets here."

Duncan was as queer a looking personage as one could hope to see in even such a place. He had got himself up on the present occasion to appear well before the party of the second part in the big trade they had lately made, and which had made the squatter the imminent possessor of more money than he had ever been quite sure there was in the world. For this wild ranch, ever so far from any where, and on which Duncan had lived with a "Siwash" squaw for nearly two decades and until between them had come half breed progeny ranging all the way from a wood chopper to the pappoose strapped to the kloochman's back, he was about to receive the sum of $100,000 in gold coin, silver or paper money just as he chose to cash the draft.

But he was paddling, like an Indian, the canoe that

was bringing Major Stamina out to the brigantine and he was as deferential to that gentleman as if he hadn't sold his ranch for big money and if the first street in the city was not to be named Duncan Avenue in honor of himself.

He was deferential to the major notwithstanding he had in honor of the occasion donned his ancient plug hat that had been cut around the crown and lowered for a distance, and as if he had not pulled on his one boot and one shoe, which odd pair, together with the "cut plug," he only wore on high days and holidays—state occasions, so to speak.

By the way, hats are very expressive always and anywhere, if one has the time and philosophy to observe them. From the elegant silk beaver of a dressy duke, to the most disreputable looking slouch that covers the unkempt poll of a confirmed tramp, this is true.

Duncan's present hat was not an exception. With that budding nabob it was a compromise between democracy and aristocracy. Duncan had been for years the leading citizen of the region in which his ranch lay, partly because there were very few other people for miles around, beside himself and his brevet family, and those

few had not proved up on their claims, hence were not possessed of government patents, as Duncan was. None of the others had so much as an apology for a wharf, as Duncan had, and none of them ever thought of such a thing as making any attempt at a change of personal appearance, as Duncan sometimes did. As a result Duncan was the leading citizen and was allowed to do any little turn possible for a stray craft of any sort that might show itself at Duncan's cove. Hence the hat and the boot and shoe.

As before remarked, the hat was an ancient tile of the plug variety cut down. To have left it at its original altitude was too much style for that "neck of woods," but lowered as it was it was still a plug, though somewhat an humble one, and thus democracy and aristocracy met on a fairly equal footing in Duncan's holiday headgear. Had it remained at its original height it would have suggested great value to the outside world as an heirloom, but no one, in even the remote vicinity of the Cove, knew that and would have appreciated the article at its full value if he had. But under this hat, in a heterogeneous collection of other apparel, that is to say, a woolen shirt that had probably been of some bright

color originally, a pair of overall trousers that gave some evidence of having once been blue, and a jacket made from a curtailed "slicker," with one leg of the overalls ostentatiously tucked in the top of the boot and the shoe leg rolled up a few turns, as a sort of stand-off for the boot, Duncan came aboard the brigantine with Major Stamina, who had been cheerfully and vociferously yelling numerous and mostly indistinguishable things, from the time of his appearance on the shore until his footing had been obtained upon the deck of the vessel. Some of those yells had been intended for the klootchman and half-breeds on the ranch, a few of them for Duncan but the majority of them for the people on the brigantine, and all were good humored, for the major was a mercurial man, sanguine, earnest and irrepressible, and what he didn't know about real estate in the west wasn't worth looking for any further.

When the canoe reached the brigantine the major clambered up and over the side of the vessel, carrying his two hundred and odd pounds of avoirdupois as if he were yet a boy, and he lit on the deck with the agility of an acrobat. Forthwith he fell to shaking hands with everybody he could reach, two at a time, whether he had ever

met them before or not, using both hands in the process, and talking all the time as volubly as a "shouter" for a side-show, in such expression as:

"Say, this is the biggest proposition on earth. I've sold town lots to a hundred people who don't know any more where the streets are than I do. But that'll be all right."

"Say, there's a hen on here, and no mistake, and something's hatchin', sure's you are alive."

"Glad to see you, old man"—this to Morse—"things are working to a T. Y. tee. Surveyors be in to-morrow to lay off the streets. Hundred people over at Watchy waiting for a chance; probably a thousand by next week."

Then seizing Van Waters he said: "Say, I've got just the thing you want. Ten lots on a rise of ground. Sure to be spang in the center of business and—"

"Never mind him," interposed Morse; "I'll look after him."

In the meantime Duncan had come aboard, having made fast his canoe to a line that hung over the ship's side, and then the millionaire, the major, the newspaper

man and the imminent nabob, went below to talk matters over, perfect plans, eat breakfast and settle things.

The business in the cabin of the brigantine was of multifarious character and resulted in the exchange of agreements, a deed, a draft, promissory notes, etc., between Duncan and Morse, boom talk and advertising plans between the major, Van Waters and Morse, and information from Morse concerning the coming of men and material for clearing the forest, grading streets and building needful houses for the beginning of the city.

These matters being settled, the major bade a demonstrative good-bye to everybody on the vessel with assurances to all that upon their return they wouldn't know the place, and other characteristic displays of his peculiar quality.

Duncan pinned his draft for $25,000 and promissory notes for $75,000 more into a pocket of his woolen shirt, and meekly manned the canoe which, with the buoyant and enthusiastic major as the only other occupant, shot out across the waters toward the little wharf.

The crew of the brigantine were soon busily hoisting the anchor and making sail. The white canvas, unclewed, spread gracefully before the favoring breeze, the

sprightly craft answering promptly the helm, stood seaward, and with the easy movement of a lithe and willowy woman retiring from a drawing room, bore away and was directly hidden from the view of those at the Cove behind a southern headland. Whereupon the major remarked sententiously:

"We'll see you later."

CHAPTER II.

St. Movadu.

Bright cities decked the boundless west,
And here the promise of the best
Sprang up as if the builder's arm
Was aided by a magic charm.

—*A Modern Temple.*

Among the other matters agreed upon during the consultation in the cabin was the name of the coming city, and it was duly christened St. Movadu. Not that any member of the quartet had a patron saint of such a name, or that either of them had ever been informed that there was a St. Movadu in all of the elastic calendar. But they were having such difficulty in agreeing upon a title for the future metropolis that the newspaper man with characteristic fertility of resource fell upon the idea of taking the first two letters from all of their surnames, and thus from Stamina, Morse, Van Waters and Duncan was evolved St. Movadu, and in the language of the major, "it went." The major, also, in earnest expression of his appreciation of Van Waters' ingenuity, exclaimed:

"Say! I wouldn't have had you left out of this deal for a horse and wagon."

Van felt flattered. It was easy to flatter that man.

On shore, the major having no other moneyed individual near at hand just then to operate on began at once to picture the prospects, probabilities and possibilities of the coming city to Duncan in such vivid colors, and with such convincing eloquence, that in a very short time he had sold town lots in four different places to that entranced capitalist in the amount of several thousand dollars.

Duncan was no fool either. He knew that the land under Morse's ownership and intentions was worth a great deal more than it was while he owned it, pressed as he was before the sale for ready cash, and uninfluential as he would have been in developing a wild ranch into a city. Thus the purchase of a small portion of that land at 500 per cent. more than he had sold it for, was the best bargain of his life.

Duncan had seen a time when he was a far different man from what he was when Newton Morse discovered him as the owner of the ranch and wharf at Duncan's Cove.

Nobody had ever taken the trouble to inquire what was Duncan's name in the states, nor what had brought him to the western edge of the republic and its deep and little explored wilderness.

He had first seen the light in the far away state of Tennessee and had been blessed in his youth with some slight advantages of education and country society, on the waters of the French Broad. In due course of time he had taken unto himself a wife who was pretty and vain, entirely illiterate and weak enough, even after she had become the mother of a healthy girl baby, to be misled by a handsome stranger, notwithstanding that she loved her husband with all the fervor of her rustic soul.

The husband discovered his dishonor, slew the man and silently fled.

He halted not until he had landed at the cove with nothing on earth, and but little on his back, and without even so much as a name beyond the one he had assumed.

Here for nearly twenty years he had lived, almost a hermit, and had become possessed of his lands, his squaw and his half-breed progeny, obtaining money for such few purposes as became necessary through the sale of

wood to semi-occasional vessels, and from furs and pelts which he now and then disposed of to traders in those wares.

Perhaps three times in all this residence in the wilderness, Duncan had visited the chief town of the territory, but now with his vast fortune of a hundred thousand he had been seized with a desire to again take a place in the haunts of men, and he did.

Whatever Duncan said to his kloochman in that strange jargon called "Chinook" that was created by the Hudson's Bay fur hunters and which has since been the means of communication between the whites and Indians of the Northwest Pacific coast, probably no one will ever know. But with seeming willingness she took her back-strapped pappoose and the one next youngest and went away to her tribe. And in the course of a few weeks Duncan betook himself to San Francisco. Not, however, until his lots had been located and he had the deeds for them.

These had been busy weeks also with Major Stamina. A number of vessels had arrived, bringing men, horses, plows, scrapers, the machinery of a saw-mill, several

blacksmithing outfits, numbers of tents and a stock of goods suitable for the wants of the crowd.

The sawmill was busy at work in the course of two or three days, and as rapidly as the circular steel buzzed through the logs and turned off slabs or planks, they were borne away for the construction of temporary buildings; hundreds of men slashed amid the timber which was turned into saw logs, sills, firewood, while vast quantities of excellent timber were piled with the brush and general refuse and burned. Continuous detonations, as from a contest of opposing batteries of artillery, came all day from giant powder shots with which men were uprooting the huge and deep-delving stumps. Steamers every day brought more men, and these brought more stores, sawmills and all the business adjuncts of the greatest "boom" that had ever been heard of.

"Real estate" offices and whisky shops soon alternated for distances along the main street, that had now been outlined and which was being rapidly cleared, graded and plank-walked. In some places the real estate offices flocked together, three or four in a row, and the saloons did the same. Then here and there appeared a butcher shop, a bakery, a grocery, a restaurant. The

wharf was enlarged and reconstructed with greater strength. Several floating pile-drivers were busy day and night with their ceaseless "Wher-er-er-er-er-er-er-blung!" The rat-tat of the hammer, the sneezing song of the hand-saw, the hiss of the plane, the rhythmic jingle of the sledge and hammer on the anvil, the shouts, songs, whistles and oaths of busy men—all were heard throughout the day and far into the night. More ambitious buildings, some two stories and occasionally one three stories high, went up. A dance and "variety" theatre building were soon erected, and one day came a steamer bringing a bevy of women for the dance house and theatre, and a brass band for the same, and the woods and hills echoed every evening to the really pleasing and fairly good music of the band that played on the balcony in front of the "Theatre Comique."

The streets increased in number and checkered the townsite; lots got to be worth one hundred, then three hundred, five hundred dollars a front foot in the most eligible places, and sometimes more.

The St. Movadu Townsite Company, composed of Newton Morse, president; James Keen, secretary; Walter Phelps, treasurer; with a few other stockholders, and

Major Stamina, general agent, had sold and was still selling lots at uniform prices, according to location, with a general advance every few weeks as the city grew, and these lots were sold and resold, sometimes twice or thrice a day, each seller realizing startling profits from his transaction.

The real estate agents were doing "a land office business," and men grew rich. Everybody made money, and the fame of St. Movadu went abroad.

In the course of four or five months there was a population of two thousand people, actual settlers. Many neat and pretty cottages had sprung up on the hillside, when the winter—or rather the rainy season—began to show signs of approach, and a few wives, daughters, sisters, mothers and other female relatives of the business men were domiciled in the new city. Before many residences had been erected and furnished, however, a number of ladies and a few children had come to stay with their male relatives, and these families lived temporarily in rooms in the second stories, over the business houses.

A better natured, more sociable and unconventional, neighborly and happy collection of people does not live in

Arcadia than dwelt in St. Movadu in those lively, hurrying, booming, hurrah days.

Meantime the "St. Movadu Times" was among the people. It was a daily from the start. Van Waters had not been idle. On the contrary, he had been entirely along with the rush, and generally ahead of it. His little journal was amply patronized from the first. It teemed with advertisements, and had to be enlarged about once a month, until from a five-column folio, it grew in five months to a six-column quarto, and sometimes on Sunday it was forced to come out with twelve and even sixteen pages to accommodate its advertising patrons and contain enough reading matter to decently carry its displays of heralded merchandise.

It is true that Van Waters did not own the outfit, which was quite an extensive one, for at the beginning it had a revolving press which at first went by man-power at the crank, and a "Nonpareil jobber," with a good supply of type and other accessories of "a first-class country office," all of which occupied a big room on the second floor over the main saloon of the town, with a little den partitioned off for the editorial room and another for the business office. But its business increasing so

rapidly, a two-story building with a brick basement was erected on a town company lot, and this spacious affair contained a small steam engine that drove the newspaper press and job presses, all of which were kept running at a great rate eight or ten hours out of the twenty-four.

Such an outfit as this was far beyond the means of Van Waters, but he was given "a working interest" contingent upon his working a certain length of time—two years, perhaps—and he was paid an excellent salary. The outfit was really owned by the "Times Printing and Publishing Company," which was composed of the Town Site Company, and other firms, real estate people, bankers, lawyers, merchants, et al., and while Van Waters was not a business man he was an enthusiastic "hustler," and a live editor, sometimes classed with the "red hot" variety.

But then the Times had a business manager. His name was John Cole, and he was supposed to know all about business management that has ever been learned in a newspaper office. And he did, so far as looking after Mr. Cole's business interests were concerned. He was a meek and acquiescent sort of a saintly sinner, was this

Cole. He was tall and thin, and looked as if he were too hungry to be able to eat much. He was a great worker, and would put in hours and days, even weeks, folding newspapers, "settin' pi," bundling old exchange papers for sale at twenty-five cents a hundred—none of which were ever sold—and in doing all sorts of jobs that would have been just the proper employment for a two-dollar-a-week boy. He doted on the Y. M. C. A. and deprecated the fact that a branch of that worthy institution had not been establish in St. Movadu, while he continually swore in a feeble sort of way, such oaths as "dog-gone it," and "gosh durn it." But he managed the business part of the Times right along, as will further appear in these faithful chronicles.

As a clerk to somebody or something, Jack Lacy came early to St. Movadu. No new city could possibly be anywhere near provided for without just such a person as this same Jack Lacy. He was the personification of versatility. If he hadn't been he would never have been able to get there. But Jack was able-bodied, though not a large man. He was about thirty-five years old then, of medium height and build—as the descriptive circulars of a fugitive from justice might say.

He had a bright, but homely face, with hair the color of a new coffee sack, and long, white eyelashes, with moustache and eyebrows to match, and his eyes were a strong, grayish blue. But Jack was an excellent bookkeeper, could play a banjo beautifully, knew how to sell groceries or dry goods, and could sing humorous songs in a clear and rich tenor. He was familiar with a camera and could develop a photograph, and was rich in memorized selections from Shakespeare, Burns, Scott, James Whitcomb Riley, Bill Nye and numerous other people, all the way between, before and behind. Moreover, he could "render" those selections in a style of declamation, original or imitative, that would have made his fortune as a comedian or professional entertainer.

These were only a few of Jack Lacy's accomplishments, and with them all he had the courage of a lion and the tenderness of a good woman. He loved birds, flowers, music, and all the arts he had ever come in contact with, and he had a genuine, unconventional politeness that was born of a generous heart. He made no further attempts in the line of literature than the occasional composition of a clever, timely and topical rhyme, but it seemed that if he had cultivated humorous liter-

ature he would have succeeded well for many reasons, a very strong one of which was that he was possessed of much of the same nature as Oliver Goldsmith—poor old "Noll."

There were times in Jack Lacy's life—even in St. Movadu—when he was excellently well dressed, even to the extent of a full evening dress suit, for proper occasions, and there were also times when his dress was decidedly "passé." But he had been heard to say when his coat was torn and he had been told that he should have it mended, that a rent might be the accident of a moment, while a patch was premeditated poverty.

During Jack's early days in St. Movadu it is known that he worked faithfully and well for a few weeks as clerk for a real estate agent, and was fairly paid, but a convivial affair occurred and Jack took to the flowing bowl on one of the periodical sprees to which he was subject, and halted not until he had dissipated his substance and his place had been filled by a soberer man.

Jack lived precariously for a few days, and then he was employed by a grocer to drive a delivery wagon, and all went well for a month until another convivial attack seized him and the grocer's horse ran away with

him and the grocery wagon, to the utter disintegration of the vehicle and a bruising for Jack that laid him up several days under the care of a doctor and at the expense of Howard Van Waters and Major Stamina, who were his staunch and admiring though reprimanding friends.

Indeed, during Jack's first year in the new city, he had nearly as many ups and downs as may be crowded by one individual into that space of time—barring, of course, the conductor of an elevator—but to quote from the annals of modern gladiatorship, he always came up smiling and he was a general favorite in those unconventional days.

Early in that time, that is to say when families were living overhead, so to speak, and before the traveling dramatic troupes had learned the way to St. Movadu, the desire for some sort of a public entertainment grew so strong upon the people—those who couldn't go to the variety theatre, or, at least take their families there—that a program of musical and literary numbers was organized among the home talent, and having been duly announced in the "Times," and with some handbills and "dodgers" pasted up and thrown about, the affair came off in due season in the dining room of the "Great Western Hotel,"

which was the very promising name of the best attempt at a caravansary that had up to this time been established.

Jack Lacy's accomplishments were numerously called into play on that occasion and his name alternated in the numbers on the program. Indeed, as some one expressed it at the time, "Jack well nigh gave the whole show, and the others were just put in to toll him on."

Be that as it may, Jack covered himself all over with glory and became the general toast.

A few of the upstairs livers took to giving private entertainments, and if Jack couldn't be there they were postponed. The first of these, and thereby the first "social event" of St. Movadu, was called a "reception," and it was given in the rooms of Judge and Mrs. Westlake. Not because Westlake was a judge, was he so called, but because he was the pioneer lawyer of the new city, and he wasn't an erudite jurist either. In the expressive, rather than delicate terms of the times, he had "only been vaccinated for a lawyer, and it didn't take as well as it might." But the judge and his jolly little wife were looked up to as social leaders then, and the "elite" were there as well as numerous other persons, and the stuffy little rooms were packed so full that one thought

of going out to turn around, if he thought of turning at all.

Mrs. Westlake was somewhat perplexed before announcing the entertainment as to whether she should call it a "reception" or a "musicale," but deferring to the judge's more dignified and well-balanced opinion, it was called a reception, and yet it was to be a display of musical and literary talent to be volunteered by the guests. Jack was invited to come and "bring his banjo," and these with the little upright piano that took more room than it deserved, seeing that it was never used for musical purposes, and it was probably so much out of tune that its use would have been impossible, were expected to furnish all the musical concords of the occasion. But no master or even mistress of the last-named instrument having turned up, Jack's banjo and declamations, humorous and otherwise, furnished out the "feast of reason and flow of soul."

The affair was a brilliant success, however, and was so announced in the "Times" next morning; for while Van Waters, the editor, couldn't be there, the city editor—who, by the way, was the entire "city staff" of the Times—was, and he always went under instructions from Van

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Waters to "whoop things up," which was characteristic of everything pertaining to St. Movadu that Van Waters could control. His paper teemed at all times with the resources of the new city and the surrounding region, and being a really metropolitan looking sort of a journal, with every sign of prosperity, it went to the four winds, all over the republic and to numerous other places.

The people of St. Movadu were proud of the "Times." It was unanimously admitted by them, and by people generally, who knew anything of the situation, to be a strong factor in the up-building of the new city, and as these city builders were from everywhere, the "Times" was sent everywhere by them to their friends. Thus it was read with avidity in many a far-away nook of the world, and its circulation taxed the capacity of the little one-cylinder press, even though it went by steam in the day time and at night by an electric motor that received its power from the dynamos of the city light company.

Jack was, of course, the success of the Westlake entertainment, the fame of which went abroad in the new city. The judge and his jolly little wife, and every one else present who had elbow room sufficient to be able to do so, applauded Jack with much vigor and refreshing

sincerity, and Jack was as proud and happy as it is possible for even so good-natured a fellow to be. He felt that he had done a big and commendable thing in lending eclat to the first society event of the new city, St. Movadu.

But Jack had sown the whirlwind.

CHAPTER III.

A Church Bell.

And thus among the timbered hills,
Spires and homes and shops and mills,
Have risen as though genii hands
Had wrought where this fair city stands.

—*A Modern Temple.*

To children the performances that resulted from the occult powers of Aladdin's lamp are very wonderful; to grown-up folks they are only amusing, because, to use a paradox, they were really mythical. The whole thing was only a story of the marvelous.

The story of St. Movadu was wonderful in truth. Nothing like it has ever been seen on the earth. Mining excitements, or something of that nature, have frequently brought suddenly together a sufficient number of people to form a great city, so far as population was concerned, but those settlements were called "camps," and indeed they were nothing else, frequently, and in many instances but little sign of them was left after a few months. Some, however, became permanent cities, one or two of which

have gone on developing and have become places of great importance. Such for instance were Denver and Leadville, Colorado, the former of which was a result of the Pike's Peak gold excitement, the latter the result of the silver mines of California Gulch. Some other places that grew to be brick and stone and iron cities, from such causes, are to-day pathetic in their quietude and helplessness.

The St. Movadu "boom" was not a result of any of these causes. Indeed it was not strictly a "boom." It was a "legitimate proposition." Its rise was directly the result of Newton Morse's enterprise, and his ambition to be the father of a great city. He exercised all the care and judgment at his control in the selection of a resourceful site, and to-day it occupies the ground that will yet be one of the greatest cities of the world, for natural reasons. In this connection it is interesting to quote from the St. Movadu "Times," of the early days, what its editor thought upon the subject of boom towns, and from one of his leaders this excerpt is made:

" 'Self praise is half scandal' is a trite saying that deserves more for its age than anything else, somewhat on the principle of the law of custom, which gains in force because the particular cus-

tom that thus became a law existed 'from a time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.' These be different times from those wherein originated the cant phrase, 'Self praise is half scandal.' Common veracity and plain candor allow people in these days to say more kindly things about themselves. How much more should they allow people to say kindly, if truthful, things about those matters in which they have material interest!

"He was a better philosopher who invented the remark, 'He that tooteth not his own horn, the same shall not be tooted.' yet that may be carried to a degree of immodesty as the first may be to one too utterly and entirely coy.

"We of St. Movadu have something to be proud of, and there is no call for us to go out and hide in the woods in order to enjoy that pride. We have a wonderfully growing city, equipped with all the modern accessories and auxilaries for still more wonderful and rapid growth.

"Has anyone ever before heard of a place off in the mightiest forest where in the sombre shade of the grandest tree-growth on earth the day-god had not touched the soil for centuries; farthest in our Union from the centers of trade and population; farthest from railways, with not even a wagon track approaching—has anyone ever heard before of such a city being built in such a space of time? A city with many miles of streets scattered over probably 500 acres? When the timber has been mown as with some Titan's scythe? Above these streets mazes of tele-

graph, telephone and electric light wires; beneath them all the complex systems of pipe and conduit for water, gas and sewerage? Lines of railway, north, east and south, connecting the young city with the marts of the world? Daily, by dozens, steamboats, steamships, ferries and sailing craft, touching at numerous costly docks, carrying a prolific traffic to and from distant isles and to lands beyond the sea?

"Let those who know nothing of this smile with incredulity. That is only natural. And let those who dwell in places that have no hope of increase by commercial or social importance prate of 'conservatism.' That is their disease. And let them scream in their feeble way about 'booms' and hold up their trembling little hands in alarm thereat and deprecation thereof. Let them if it does them any good entertain themselves with attempts at disparagement of young cities that, like ours, have sprung suddenly, as did Minerva from the head of Jove, fully armed and equipped for duty. It is a little custom of those 'conservative' places to speak of such cities as St. Movadu as 'boom towns,' the very rapidity of whose growth is sought to be made a point to their disadvantage while some owlish municipality is pointed to as a splendid example of 'steady growth.'

"This 'steady growth' in anything is a hoax. There are ages in children when their growth is much more rapid than at other periods of their youth, and some 'develop' much earlier in life than others. Vegetation, under the influence of sunshine and shower, reaches maturity more rapidly in some seasons and

countries than in others. These phenomena are due to natural causes and excite no comment, while the operations of the same principle in industrial matters brings an ignorant protest from those not affected.

"The 'lambs' that have been shorn in 'booms' are everywhere. So are the unfortunates who have failed in settled communities, for lack of ability, tact, enterprise or adaptability. The money lost by the individual has generally gone into public improvements.

"There are 'booms' in every undertaking, and the building of towns is no exception. There are 'booms' in politics, 'booms' in music, 'booms' in art, 'booms' in education; and He who 'Sways the harmonious mystery of the universe better than prime ministers' gave to Christian history its Pentecost.

"There is a vast deal of truth in this, and it should carry much encouragement to many who need it."

St. Movadu's growth was astounding. In twelve months from the day that Major Stamina set his men to work for Newton Morse and his associates, clearing away the primeval forest at Duncan's Cove, there had grown a town of ten thousand inhabitants, with all the adjuncts and accessories of a city much greater than that, and with some metropolitan advantages of which many great cities are yet unpossessed.

During that time, over twenty-five miles of wide and

beautiful streets were graded and paved, excellent sewer, water, police and fire protection and electric street railway systems had been placed in operation. The city was brilliantly lighted by night with electric lights and the places of business and hundreds of homes were supplied with the electric incandescent bulbs. A grand hotel and opera house were among the public buildings; there were clubs and lodges, banks and school houses, some of the latter imposing in dimensions and splendid in architecture. Massive brick, stone and iron business houses had arisen in the central part of the city and residences that were palatial in structure and furnishing, ornamented the hillsides and crowned their tops. Charming lawns, rich in verdure and teeming with beautiful flowers surrounded the latter, and there were churches of many Christian denominations. Churches that would have been a credit to the old cities of the far eastern states.

The first place of worship erected in the young city was a union tabernacle in which all denominations congregated for public devotions to the one God, of whom even the almost heathen have devoutly sung "Allah il Allah."

There is no God, the fool had said—
The ingrate of his race—
With all that's good, and fair, and true,
Outspread before his face.

"Allah il Allah," wise men say—
God is, and God is good;
And many go to seek Him out
By ancient faith or rood.

The Islam takes his mountain road,
The Brahm his desert path,
The Christian goes with cowl and staff
To face the tempest's wrath.

The Turk, the Saracen and Moor,
The Afric and the Hun,
The Roman, Goth and Indian,
To find the One bright Sun.

And though the ways of all diverge,
Each pilgrim finds the goal;
For God is good, and everywhere,
The Substance and the Whole.

His presence spans the universe;
All paths lead on to Him.
He is the Sum of all that is—
Duration's length and limb.

And, brothers, tho' as blades of grass
We stand together here,
We'll meet each other and our God
In His Eternal sphere.

—*The Shriners.*

One bright Sunday morning the rich, deep and resonant peal of a church bell rang out upon the clear and fir-scented air. It sang cheerily and yet grandly amid the mighty woods. The rhythmic tones rolled in silver cadence over the hills and gave tongue to a chime of echoes up the canyons and across the dancing waters. Such music nature had never heard before in that region. Pleasantly it startled the people. The dear old familiar sounds seemed to come from away back home. The man of the house looked up from the book or newspaper he was reading; the good wife left off her dishwashing or the buttoning of the children's Sunday dresses; the children clapped their little hands in delight; the housemaid leaned pensively on her broom; then all ran to the windows and doors. The whisky-mixer in the saloon held suddenly still, decanter in hand, to hear the sonorous melody, and the toper paused, with the hell-broth at his lips, to listen. The young city was charmed for a moment, and then, Sunday as it was, men rushed from their homes and

from such places of business as were then open and shouted with a strange joy. Then there was a spontaneous and heartfelt, long-resounding and oft-repeated, "Hurrah for the church bell!"

Jack Lacy caught up a bundle of paper bags lying on the counter of Kingbury's grocery, within whose half-closed doors he was lounging, and dashed off in dialect, a rhythmic song, breathing a tune to it as he wrote:

Do hear that bell a ringin'
On this sunny Sunday mornin',
It sounds like angels singin'
A kind and gentle warnin'—
Singin' a sweet warnin'—
To the sinners all aroun'
Beside the music in it,
With its clear and silv'ry soun',
It's the first church bell that ever rung
To call these sinners down.

Ain't it good to hear it—
That clear and silv'ry soun'—
That bell a ringin' out so sweet
The first one in the town?

The tall pines done the singin'
Just a little while ago,

An' the vines were thick an' clingin'
From the gray beach down below,
Where the waters ebb and flow.
To where the snow is gleamin'
Far up at timber line.
Then the woods were little dreamin'
That the church bells here should ring,
When Sunday's sun was streamin'.

But ain't it good to hear it—
That clear and silv'ry soun'—
That church bell ringin' out so sweet,
The first one in the town.

When the tabernacle was the only church of the embryo city, the services were more unconventional, the worship was more sincere, the singing was more enthusiastic. There was a whole-heartedness in it all that has gone somewhere. But it is not lost. It is, perhaps, scattered among the isms, but the All-Seeing Eye can place every iota and atom of it. For while Charity sits estranged among the silks and velvets, the rich odors and the brilliant lights; the sham and show of the great church; meek and modest, prayerful and unassuming, Charity is there. The leaven that lighteneth; the piety and purity that saves the church from its load of hypoc-

risy and deceit, is there, engrafting it with the true religion that was erst of the old tabernacle, and its kind. Sweet Charity, "without which all is as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal," is the saving salt of it all.

In the tabernacle only those were seen, most of the time, who went on duty bent, and yet the congregation was a large one.

True, all those that attended these services were not professing christians, for there were many who, like Jack Lacy, had glaring faults, but who also like him, had the redeeming qualities of reverence for holy things, candor and openness of character; every-day integrity and honor; truthfulness, humanity, courage and fidelity; full of gratitude and hateful of affected precisiveness and shallow ostentation; who knew they were not as good as they should be, but who did not make pretence on Sundays, and cheat their neighbors when opportunity afforded on week days; men and women who often prayed in secret, admitting their sins at all times in their hearts, yet hopeful, notwithstanding that the prayers of the righteous are those that avail the most.

Phariseeism did not belong in the tabernacle. True piety and acknowledged sin foregathered there, for de-

votion by the one and confession by the other. Yet there were some who were between both of these.

They meant well.

It was a rich, full and sweet contralto voice in the congregational singing one moonlit Sabbath evening, in the tabernacle days, that helped to fill Jack Lacy's heart with the pure pleasure of the meeting, and he traced the velvet tones to their source. What a modest yet strong and earnest mouth it was; what a shapely little head and what glorious melting brown eyes the singer had; how neat and tidy and quiet the dress; how easily poised and self-possessed seemed the figure that was the abode of all this.

Dr. Price and Jack Lacy were excellent friends. Jack knew how good and true and earnest and sensible the preacher was, and the preacher knew that Jack was far better than many of his betters—strange as that may seem— and he admired Jack's manliness far more than he did the goody-goodness of some others of his flock. Besides Jack was helpful. He was fond of helping anywhere that he possibly could, and he was particularly fond of being helpful to the tabernacle and its promoters, especially the preacher.

The house needed an organized choir to better lead the singing, and to sometimes even give a concerted number, and Jack was on the lookout for talent for this organization.

Forthwith he confided to Dr. Price his earnest and immutable opinion that the choir could never be successfully established without that particular voice and the sage old preacher smilingly and readily agreed that Jack's declaration was on the firmest foundation.

There and then—that is to say at the close of the service—through the kind instrumentality of Dr. Price, Mr. Lacy became duly, properly and ceremoniously acquainted with the possessor of the voice, Miss Ada Benson. But Jack was not a gentleman who was inclined to stand any serious length of time upon ceremony or anything else that presented the character of an obstacle. He proceeded at once to unfold his plans, as to the choir, to Miss Benson, and coolly asked the privilege of walking home with her in order that they might further discuss the matter during the stroll.

The distance from the church to where the young lady resided was cruelly short to Jack Lacy, and as he had a capacity for entertaining young ladies, conversationally,

that was one of the most suddenly apparent of his many accomplishments, Miss Benson found the walk an exceedingly agreeable one, and she quite enthusiastically entered into Jack's plans regarding the musical organization. Jack agreed to enlist some other desirable persons for the corps, and it was agreed that the entire body, or such portions of it that could be controlled, should meet in the parlor, on the following Wednesday evening, at Mr. Dawson's residence, where Miss Benson was boarding, that young lady undertaking to gain the consent of the Dawson proprietorship to that end.

This matter having been settled at some length by the conspiring parties, and the door of the Dawson establishment having been reached some minutes earlier, the propriety of withdrawing finally dawned upon the somewhat reluctant perception of Mr. Lacy, who trudged homeward filled to the brim with refreshingly pleasant emotions.

And Mr. Lacy turned over a whole chapter of new leaves.

CHAPTER IV.

Ada Benson.

With all we get of life, or fame, or gold,
Existence here is dark, and sad and cold,
Without that light and blessing from above,
One sweet and trusting earnest woman's love.

—*More Than All.*

Orphaned in early childhood, Ada Benson had been taken to an Indiana village and brought up there by a maternal uncle, who, though possessed of a fairly prosperous business in "general merchandising" on a scale not considered gigantic even in that village, was also possessed of a family so large as to be somewhat disproportionate to his income. But his wife was a kindly creature who managed with economical care the domestic affairs of their modest establishment, and Ada's life had been a pleasant one, though commonplace enough.

While endowed with unusual beauty and more than average intelligence, she was of a quiet and gentle nature and had been without opportunity to prove to others particularly interested in such matters, a somewhat re-

markable musical talent, and hence had not entirely appreciated herself.

Her musical instruction had been confined to the limited advantages of the village school, in that branch, so far as the piano was concerned, and the vocal part of it to the supposed-to-be-concerted singing of her fellow students, the congregational singing, and chants of the little Episcopal church in which she had been christened after her orphanage, and in which she had been confirmed at the proper age.

In the village school she had also obtained such an education as that institution afforded, which was altogether considerable, seeing that she had easily "graduated" as, by all odds, the most satisfactory pupil of the school.

This, with the fund of religious information, obtained through the curriculum of the Sunday school, including the Book of Common Prayer, with its memorized creed, catechism, litany, collects, morning and evening service, and many of the hymns and psalms, with all the accessory instruction of the church training, had really equipped Ada Benson far better than many young ladies

are who go through the "polishing" processes of seminaries and alleged female colleges and universities.

Yet her little world had been so circumscribed that when the death of her uncle came, during Ada's eighteenth year, and it became necessary for her to earn her living alone, she was startled. While it did not appall her, for she had a stout heart, she was not possessed of the confidence that her abilities and attainments should have given her. She had never been called upon to calculate what they were as compared to those of many other girls who have been confronted by such a condition of affairs as was now before her.

Her friend, the old rector, who had christened her and who had tenderly watched her in his lambfold until the bishop had come to place her among the full-grown sheep of the flock, advised her when the day came that demanded her self-reliance, to take a place that he procured for her as a teacher in the schools of a neighboring town, and cheerfully, though with some trepidation, she entered upon her work and succeeded.

After nearly two years, in which she had been so successful as a teacher as to astonish herself, she accepted a place that had been offered by an old friend of her pastor,

as an assistant in one of the schools of the far distant west.

Thus fate and fortune led her to St. Movadu.

After one has got along in years and has provided himself with a domestic aggregation, he will frequently see and observe such girls as Ada Benson and wonder what sort of fools the young fellows must be who allow them to go so much alone, or even permit them to continue along in years until they have grown into that abnormal and somewhat uncertain state, the general description of which is "old maidenhood."

But as knowing as these old fellows are supposed to be, and as they more frequently think themselves, they are not always entirely informed as to the causes of this supposed to be undesirable situation of spinsterhood. Sometimes it comes on before the coquette has taken second thought of the danger; sometimes, but very seldom, through the obtuseness of the young fools alluded to. More frequently it is the deliberate good judgment of the lady in question, who is more observant, perhaps, than the old fellow is. She wisely concludes that it is better to be a respectable old maid than to be the cook who prepares the meals of the shiftless young fellow,

the nurse to his children, the laundry woman of his uncomfortable household and the general drudge of his more or less squalid and peripatetic establishment.

In those young days of St. Movadu, however, there was no good reason to berate the young fellows for lack of attention to Ada. Young ladies were exceedingly scarce by comparison and there were numerous attempts at tender attention to Ada. That young lady was not to be snapped up, however, as a mere result of an exigency, and had young ladies been even so plentiful as old maids in the place from whence male immigration had streamed toward the west, she had not, up to the time of Jack Lacy's advent into her acquaintance, been overwhelmed with the peculiar and particular desirability of special male company or even a great deal of it, generally and sporadically, so to speak. Nor was she even so susceptible as to become suddenly and irretrievably overcome by the blandishments of the versatile Mr. Lacy. Yet she was greatly pleased with that debonair young gentleman to the extent of her knowledge of him, which, it must be admitted, was, fortunately for him, quite meagre at that juncture.

Jack was much the other way in the matter of sus-

ceptibility, and as it is partly the motive of these chronicles to puncture shams, and to do something in the way of iconoclasm among trite old sayings, unwarranted but general conclusions, and a great deal of unfounded belief, it may be just as well to say right here that it does not always follow, because one becomes easily attached to, or fond of another, that this necessarily implies fickleness.

On the contrary, quite the reverse.

Persons of an affectionate disposition are nearly always the most faithful. Besides if they do not easily become attached and give plain exhibitions of their fondness how can it be known that they are affectionate?

When affectionate, or let it be said, susceptible people, find that the objects of their fondness are unworthy, then it would be reprehensible in them to continue such attachments, and to relinquish them should not be regarded as fickleness.

Jack was both susceptible and faithful. He had loved quite a number of girls in his brief career, but when he failed, after the most diligent investigation, to discover any symptoms of reciprocity, he was thoroughly capable,

without disastrous results to himself, of foregoing quest or explanation.

Indeed, it was a frequent remark from Jack, when upbraided for what seemed, sometimes, to be a lack of tenacity on his part, particularly in business ventures, that he knew "when to let go."

This is a quality of discriminative sapience that is more infrequent than might, prima facie, be supposed. Though many persons have, in many ways, found it more difficult to let go than it was to take hold.

This has often occurred in the matter of real estate holdings in boom towns, and a remarkable case of the same kind is illustrated in a story of a man who once, by some means, got hold of an indignant and very active bear by his exceedingly brief tail.

Let it not be understood that Jack Lacy became enamored of eligible young ladies in an infatuous and purposeless sort of way, notwithstanding that it had often been in a manner apparently lacking calculation as to results. He had indeed exhibited most commendable taste, invariably, and he was sufficiently a philosopher not to reprehend the taste of those young ladies who had rejected his ardent and eloquent advances. Yet he had

always been possessed of an abiding faith that if one of them had been more lenient and had accepted his offers to their legitimate culmination, she would have done a good thing for him and perhaps for herself and society generally.

"Nil desperandum," was Jack's unexpressed motto in the matter, however, and he felt with regard to his numerous sorties, reconnoitres, advances and charges upon the citadel of love, that vain as they had been heretofore the result must be in his favor at last, for he believed that if all things come to those who wait, something must also, eventually, be reached by him, who doesn't wait, but rather goes after it.

His earnestness in the matter of organizing the choir had been reinforced by the advantages that apparently must accrue to him in his latest and present case of partiality. So he had labored diligently among those in and out of his acquaintance who had exhibited capacity for vocalization, or even premonitory symptoms of song power.

Thus it was, that on the Wednesday evening appointed, a sufficient multitude of persons had foregathered in Mr. Dawson's parlors to not only organize a

choir for the tabernacle, so far as numbers were concerned, but to have provided a chorus for a carnival, had the voices all been favorable to the numbers in another sense.

Jack had endeavored not to exhibit any partiality in his choice of people, and had also provided for the possible, and even, as he supposed, probable, absence of that usually unknown element which is generally more full of promise than practice.

But this recruiting agent had overlooked one characteristic of humanity, in such places and under such circumstances. He had overlooked the more or less existent predilection of the average individual who harbors a conviction that he can sing, to try it on the public.

Thus Mr. Lacy had created a quandary. To select six or eight persons, out of a possible twenty, as desirable factors in a singing corps, without, in the act of preference, making the matter an invidious affair, was something as puzzling as the trouble of Agamemnon from among the Grecian heroes.

So it came about that Jack and Ada must lay their heads together, and though this was to be only a metaphorical recumbence, simply indicative of a more or less

confidential consultation and consideration, it entirely compensated for the quandary, as to Jack, who would have been equal to unnecessarily delaying the proceedings. Hence he was intentionally bereft of his usual fruitfulness and ingenuity of resource on the subject in hand, to a shameful degree.

It was finally agreed, however, that Dr. Price should publicly explain the situation and the persons should choose by election, after all the voices had been tried in sextets, which of the sextets should be the choir.

The result of this was that Dr. Price arranged the party into five companies, he sagely choosing from those he knew to be the best—or rather the least reprehensible—of the singers and placing them in the sextet with Miss Benson and Mr. Lacy.

That sextet was immediately and unanimously chosen, amid much hilarity, for if there is one thing more than another that makes glad the heart of the average American, it is an election.

Then the good pastor, with pardonable, even excusable pseudology, commented in the most gratifying way upon the alleged fact that it was a great pity all could not belong to the choir, but consoled himself, and through

himself the congregation of the tabernacle, that the services would be made more delightful by having so many such superior voices in the general praise by song.

For this latter he had great good warrant, so to speak, inasmuch as praise of the Great Giver is commendable, whether it be in perfect vocalization or in the strident tones of a fractured register.

The choir became a joy to Jack, whether or not it was to the congregation of the tabernacle and others within hearing of its well-intended efforts. It seemed, however, to give widespread satisfaction and was highly commended, not only by the public but by the press of St. Movadu.

There was one kind of harmony in it, at least.

CHAPTER V.

A Confession.

No troubadour in days of yore,
E'er sang in accents free
A song so sweet at love's fair feet,
As I would sing to thee.

—*Geraldine.*

"Have you ever heard anything bad about me, Miss Ada?" said Mr. Jack Lacy to Miss Ada Benson, one evening, as he was seeing her home from a choir meeting at the tabernacle.

"Oh yes, I have heard ever so many awful things about you," she replied.

"What were they?"

"It would shock you if I told."

"No, indeed, nothing would shock me that was said of myself, unless I feared it might depreciate me in your estimation."

Jack was not growing tender, he was simply about to expose some of his tenderness.

He was always gentle, in his normal condition, but

positively tigerish when aroused by indignation.

Besides matters had been progressing delightfully between Mr. Lacy and Miss Benson. He had been established in the "Miss Ada" stage for some time, and she in the "Mr. Jack," by mutual request, and that in itself was quite significant. Besides the preference of these two for each other's society had become so plain that the other people, who always, everywhere, feel it their duty to note and comment upon such affairs, had noted and were commenting.

"You do me great honor, Mr. Jack," she said in response to his last remark, "but you should really cultivate more self-esteem," she smilingly continued.

"I'm going to do all sorts of self-cultivation now," Jack returned, and the "now" bore a world of meaning. "But I do want to know all the bad things you have heard of me, and then I will know best what to alter. Won't you tell me?" he pleaded.

"Why, yes; I am told that you do not care enough for yourself; that you are at the beck and call of any one who solicits your help; that you are too good-hearted, in short. These are awful things to have said about you, ain't they?"

"Do you think so?"

"No, Mr. Jack. I don't think any one can possibly be too helpful, or too good-hearted. But really I have heard these things said of you in a deprecatory way."

"Well, they are correct in a certain sense. But I do very little in the way of helping anybody. I haven't got anything to help them with, besides there are no very poor people here. There is one thing I do, however, too much, and that is what these talkers probably allude to—"

"I know; you give your services to everything in the nature of an entertainment that is gotten up for the benefit of this or that end—"

"I make myself common, you mean."

"Yes, if you choose to put it that way."

"Well, that was what I was thinking of when you mentioned my helping everything."

"But it is not only that, Mr. Jack, you—oh, what an arraignment I am making of you."

"Go on; I like it."

"Why?"

"Because it shows you take some interest in me."

"You flatter yourself," she naively said.

"Yes, I'm given to that."

"You are candid."

"Yes, now go on with your arraignment."

"I am told you sit up with sick people whom you never knew until they were taken down; that you—oh, you do all sorts of things like that."

"Perhaps that is true, but then I like it."

"I am glad you do. It speaks volumes for you, but gratitude is so scarce."

"Bread upon the waters."

"I have not had much experience, but somehow it seems that bread upon the waters doesn't come back just when one is the hungriest."

"I have noticed that myself. But you have not mentioned the bad things about me that I was afraid you had heard, and such things are always worse in appearance when they come second-handed. May I tell you?"

"I would rather hear you tell bad things of yourself than to listen to anyone else on that subject. But if they are too bad I'd—well—I'd—rather not hear them at all."

Jack's heart gave a great leap in delight.

"That is inexpressibly kind of you, Miss Ada, but you will hear the things of which I am going to speak, and I

would like to prepare you for them, Ada—may I not say Ada?"

"Yes," she softly replied.

"I would like to tell you a story about myself. I am frightfully egotistical."

"I would be delighted to hear it."

They had arrived at the Dawson home, where Miss Benson had become almost as one of the family. The evening was one of St. Movadu's best—an evening in June following a day as warm as ever known in the Puget Sound region, and that is not warmer than many days in early spring elsewhere in the United States, near the same latitude. The gibbous moon rode high in the exalted heavens, with now and then a fleecy cloud passing like a thin veil across her face. The stars that look twice the size they do as seen from elsewhere, seemed glad and neighborly, and there was a gentle breeze from the broad bay that came over Duncan's Cove and up the hillside to the Dawson house and on.

A wide portico that extended the length of the house's front and some rustic seats, chairs and settees were there, and a table. The hall door stood wide open and electric lights illuminated that and the drawing room, and there

were lights in other apartments of the residence, but none of the household seemed astir.

Jack and Ada passed through the gate and up the walk and the few steps that led to the portico, and stood for a moment or two entranced with the scene below them. They looked over the terraces of houses that stood along the lower streets; over the roofs and chimneys, down to the shimmering waters of the bay, where the path of light danced beneath the moon from the inner shore of the cove, out between the caulks of the horse-shoe and across the bay to the wooded shores beyond.

"Isn't it beautiful?" she said.

"It makes me feel mean," he laughed. "In all the varying moods of these grand sights that I have seen I have always been tempted to write about them."

"Is that mean?" she asked with feigned astonishment.

"Poetry."

"Oh!"

"But some day I will write poetry."

"I am sure you write poetry now."

"Doggerel. Yet I know that I have poetry in me, but it is so difficult to get it out. I often feel for the muses,

they are towsled about so much by well-meaning people and with so little good effect—me among the others."

"You are young yet, Mr. Jack, and I shall wait patiently for you."

He almost caught her in his arms as he said:

"If you only would."

"Yes, I shall wait patiently for you to write some great poetry and win fame in that glorious art. But now, what was this story of yourself that you were going to tell me?"

"It was not for the sake of talking about myself, Ada, but as some defense of my character and certain shortcomings."

"I think I know," she said, with charming tenderness, peculiarly charming to Mr. Jack Lacy. "Please don't apologize."

"It is this, Ada. I was brought up in the south, came of an old southern family, and the surroundings of my youth were full of sentiment, almost romance, and I sometimes think I am Quixotic in many ways. I certainly believe in the existence of chivalry and am disposed to fight a great many wrongs that perhaps I ex-

aggerate, so far at least as they affect me, which they would not at all if I chose to ignore them. Thus I have sometimes got a black eye from a windmill. Among the people of my class, where I was raised, courtesy and kindness and truth prevailed, and it was rare that any one ever said anything or did anything calculated to wound the feelings of another, unless it was done in anger or by an open enemy. Sarcasm was unknown between associates.

"A man who behaved himself and kept clean was regarded an honest and honorable gentleman until he proved to be the contrary by some overt act, or a covert one that was discovered. I have found a great deal of the contrary prevailing in many other regions where I have been, and I have found that one is generally considered untrustworthy until he proves the contrary."

"A strange sort of civilization," Ada interjected.

"Yes, but those of my sex who find fault with it and resent it when affected by it are charged with being supersensitive." Jack was evidently beating about the bush.

"I don't know exactly why I mentioned these things to you, Ada," he continued. "They are not what I started to say."

Then, with an effort, he plunged into the matter he desired to explain.

"The fact is, Ada, I have one great fault—or have had —that I feared you might have heard of."

She watched him closely and listened attentively.

"My associates were exceedingly social and convivial in youth, and from them I acquired a habit of drinking intoxicants, and not believing that I was endangering myself I continued at it until two or three years ago, when I found that I was doing my physical self, my character and my opportunities in life much violence, and determined to stop it. I did stop it, and then I found myself struggling against an appetite that had grown exceedingly strong. I fought it manfully, however. But now and then under the influence of some unusual excitement, extraordinary occasion, or the worry that exorcised sensitiveness has produced, I have given away to that appetite and have drank too much. Sometimes disgracefully too much, so far as my own dignity, self-respect, business affairs and a desirable reputation for steadiness are concerned.

"It was that, that I was afraid you had heard of, Ada. It was this that I felt more uneasiness about than any-

thing else. And I have thought more of it since I have had the pleasure of your acquaintance than ever before in my life."

"But now when you see it so plain, you will guard yourself against it more closely, will you not?"

"Indeed I will, for your sake, Ada."

"No, for your own sake, and those who love you—your mother and sisters, for yourself and all your friends."

"But won't you be one of them?" he pleaded.

"I am a deeply interested friend of yours, Mr. Jack."

"Won't you be more, Ada?" he said, rising and taking both her hands, "I believe that if you would give me leave to live for you I would not only be steady forever and forever, but I would be ambitious for fame and wealth and everything that would make you happier. That I know would exalt me to the very zenith of happiness, and I would work so hard for it all—for you."

"Dear Jack, you are so good," she sighed.

"I love you Ada, with all my soul, and it is a pure, white soul, Ada, barring the taint I told you of."

"That can be washed away, Mr. Jack."

"Indeed it can. I will wash it away in my love for you. Won't you love me a little, Ada?"

"A great deal," she murmured, and Mr. Jack Lacy folded Miss Ada Benson to his heart and kissed her sweet lips with all the fervor of a pure and healthy passion.

"If I am true to my promise and do something to show you that I will prove a loving, protecting and worthy mate, you will be my wife, won't you, Ada darling?"

"Yes," she whispered, and Mr. Jack Lacy kissed her again, registered an inward vow that he would conquer the world for this sweet creature. He would make for her a home that would be an Eden compared to which no mortal couple ever dreamed of, in-so-far as comfort and love and happiness were concerned.

Naturally enough Mr. Jack Lacy would have stood there holding that lovely girl in his arms, until he would have been utterly unable, from sheer exhaustion, to begin early next day the work of preparing his material Eden, but for the fact that Miss Benson, being possessed of much more practical capacity for building Edens than he was, gently released herself from him and said:

"You must go now. It is time I should be in doors."

He reluctantly admitted the truth of that, and was

walking to the door of the hall with her, when they heard a light step approaching. Jack stood decorously apart as Mrs. Dawson's kind and gentle face appeared in the light from the incandescent globe, and taking Miss Benson distantly by the hand as if giving her the most conventional of good-bye salutes, he said:

"Yes, the choir sang much better than I expected it would in such a short rehearsal—ah, good evening, Mrs. Dawson." Following her gentle return of the salutation, he added:

"You ought to have heard the choir's rehearsal for next Sunday. It was great. But you will hear it Sunday. I am afraid it is very late. So good-night, Mrs. Dawson, good-night, Miss-a-Benson."

Love is such a liar!

CHAPTER VI.

Independence Day.

High flies the flag of freedom and Columbia to-day,
And gracefully 'tis draping in the breezes from the bay;
Bright shines the gleaming galaxy of interlinking stars,
While stream in undulating waves its white and crimson bars.

—*Two Songs of Single Tune.*

Even as early as May, of St. Movadu's second year, the patriotic and enthusiastic builders of that phenomenal city began to talk earnestly about celebrating the coming Fourth of July, and in a short time it had been determined that this thing should be done in a manner characteristic of the place and its people.

Committees on this, that and the other, to act for the end suggested, were appointed at meetings of the Ajax Club and the Chamber of Commerce from these bodies, and a mass meeting was held in the tabernacle to make other arrangements; to appoint additional committees and to raise the necessary funds. As to the latter, a sufficient amount was subscribed in the course of half an hour, and it reached up far into the thousands of dollars.

The chairman of the meeting requested the people of the audience to announce from their seats what they were willing to give in furtherance of the occasion, and the list was headed by James Woodruff with a "cool five hundred." Others followed in rapid succession with equal amounts and then they began to drop to two hundred, and one hundred, and fifty, and twenty-five, according to the financial ability of the donors.

Money was almost as plenty those days in St. Movadu as are leaves in Vallambrosa, according to common report and tradition.

From the time of the mass meeting until the consummation of the object for which it was held had been achieved, the coming celebration was continually on the tongues of all patriots in that prosperous, wide-awake and happy community. The people of neighboring cities and towns were invited to participate, en masse, and not content with giving even such great signs of broad hospitality as that, a committee was dispatched to the British Columbia cities and towns, of the northward, with pressing invitations to the people there to come and join in the celebration of a Declaration which eventuated in freeing from the crown to which they were yet subject

what is now the Republic that commemorates the most successful rebellion recorded in history.

Two or three days before the great day had arrived, the people of St. Movadu were engaged in decorating the walls and windows and streets of the city with evergreens and banners, flags, mottoes, garlands and arches, to give a pleasing appearance and a glorious welcome to their visitors, and to make as happy as possible the great event.

The day came bright and clear and balmy, and with it throngs of people from every direction, by rail and sail, in all sorts of vehicles, on horseback and on foot, and great steamers, laden with multitudes of our British cousins, rounded to, majestically, at the wharves and discharged their processions, among which were borne in great numbers the flags of Britain and America gracefully draped together. Bands of music headed the crowds from each of the steamers, and all were welcomed by masses of the people of St. Movadu, and other cities on the southern side of the line, with cheers and the music of bands from the city and other places that had already gathered there. A vast, temporary wooden structure had been erected and gaily decorated for the

oratorical and musical exercises of the occasion; besides which every outdoor sport common to the people of both nations had been prepared for and were carried on. Cricket, base ball, la crosse, bicycle races, a greased pig and a greased pole, foot races, jumping matches, and indeed fun, amusement and entertainment for everybody were provided.

When the time came for the exercises in the great building the place was crowded to the fullest, and yet thousands were unable to gain admission, the large majority of whom, however, were, happily, more interested in the sports and other entertaining features of the day.

The most brilliant orator of the state had been secured for the leading address, and one or two eminent speakers from the British side delivered appropriate speeches.

The general committee of arrangements had some weeks previously requested Jack Lacy to prepare a poem for the occasion. The versatile Mr. Lacy, for the first time in his life, was placed before an obstacle that appalled him. How to write a poem glowing with American patriotism, celebrating the Republic's greatest holiday, and at the same time one that would fall easily upon the ears of subjects of Great Britain, was a question that

worried him, and was a problem most difficult of solution. But Lacy was not disposed to allow any obstacle to thwart him, so he had accepted the task, and fought with it through many days and nights. Two or three days previous, however, to the Fourth of July, the idea of two songs of single tune came to him like an inspiration. It occurred to him that "My country 'Tis of Thee,"—our own national hymn "America,"—and "God Save the Queen"—the British national hymn—were set to the same music. Made happy with this thought the always obliging rhymster caught up the first sheets of blank paper within his reach, and quickly produced the verses that follow, and which, in a strong, musical and sympathetic voice, he read from memory, amid the enthusiastic applause of both the gathered peoples.

These are the lines:

High flies the flag of Freedom and Columbia to-day,
And gracefully 'tis draping in the breezes from the bay.
Bright shine the gleaming galaxy of interlinking stars,
While stream in undulating waves its white and crimson bars.

To-day the sons of Britain and America are here,
To meet in friendly greeting and with wholesome, hearty cheer,
Not, like in old colonial days, in grim and hostile ranks,
But brethren, from one common stock, enlightenment's phalanx.

We've met again, like freemen, to closer weave the bands
That bind the kindred people of these our kindred lands,
And to hear the same rich music, that in one swelling pean,
Doth blend "My Country 'Tis of Thee" with grand "God Save
the Queen."

We've come to praise the heroes that freedom's battle won,
As British stars of letters and statesmanship have done,
In days of war and days of peace, in forum, field and home,
Wher'er the British drumbeat's heard beneath the ether dome.

From eloquence of mighty Pitt, who gave fair justice tongue,
To praises of George Washington that gifted Byron sung;
From Green, the grand historian of Britain's rule and sway,
To Cobden, Bright and Gladstone, of her brilliant latter day.

With Macaulay, and with Thackeray and other glorious men
Who Britain's glory have enriched by mitre, sword and pen,
Whose breadth and wealth of candor magnanimously gave
The meed of praise and honor to our noble, true and brave.

We come as co-enjoyers of this bright western land,
Divided only by a line of fast-dissolving sand,
To clasp the hand in kindness, to bring each other joy;
To find surcease from daily toil and carking care's alloy.

So let the nation's bells ring out, and all her banners wave,
While Freedom's light from Freedom's sun the blessed land shall
lave;

Let cross-the-border brethren, and kinsmen here, be gay,
While blow the cornets, beat the drums, for Independence Day.

Fling out the flag that patriots have trusting followed, when
Dread battle's blight has tried the souls of truest, bravest men,
And when betimes 'twas only seen within the rifting cloud
Before whose leaden storm of hail War's sable plume has bowed.

And while the bells are ringing and joy is everywhere;
While Harmony is singing two songs of single air,
We'll praise the God of nations and one undying love,
And bow in grateful thankfulness for blessings from above.

And let us hope the pattern set, by Anglo-Saxon sires,
Who lit for all humanity sweet Freedom's altar fires,
May win till all the nations shall stand beside us here,
Unawed by any despot's rule or aught to make them fear.

Then higher yet the banner of Columbia shall fly,
And brighter shine the gleaming stars against its azure sky;
And yet more gracefully shall wave its bars of red and white,
An emblem and a talisman of perfect human right.

Before the committee of the Ajax club, a week or two previous to the celebration, Major Stamina had made a speech something like this:

"Gentlemen, I want to be appointed a committee of one, and no question asked, to get up a feature for the

Fourth, and I'll make it a corker and no mistake. I'll bring something here that you can bet your lives will make a sensation clean out of sight. Just say the word, let me alone, and I'll be on time with the feature of the day."

The committee knew Major Stamina would do something remarkable, and they were glad to appoint him "a committee of one with no questions asked."

A day or two afterward, Major Stamina suddenly disappeared from the city, but returned on the following day looking very mysterious, his eyes twinkling, in portrayal of perfect self-satisfaction. When asked where he had been, and what he had been doing, he replied: "I've been 'tending to my committee work, and I'll be there with both feet, and don't you forget it. No mistake, gentlemen."

The major was missed again on the evening preceeding the Fourth, but early on the morning of that glorious day he was seen coming from across the bay, standing in the bow of one of five huge Indian canoes, of which fleet he appeared to be the masterful commodore. These canoes, one after another, shot into Duncan's Cove, and were beached upon the sand-bar described early in this

faithful chronicle. It was then known that Major Stamina's committee work consisted in the organization of an Indian canoe race. The major had visited the nearest Indian reservation, and, for a purse offered by himself, had engaged this intensely interesting feature for the amusements of the occasion. Immediately after the exercises in the great wooden pavilion it was announced that the canoe race would occur.

These canoes were about forty feet in length, and, when empty, were so light that they danced upon the waters like a cork. For this occasion each one of the five canoes that Major Stamina had secured was manned by ten athletic Indians, dressed in the simple garb of their own copper-colored cuticle, barring a breech clout about the hips, and a scarf of bright and varied colors tied across the forehead and knotted at the back of the head of each stalwart Siwash.

When the time for the race had arrived, a tug-boat with the major and a few chosen friends, among them Lacy, Van Waters, and the honorable orators of the day, escorted the canoes to a buoy, about a mile out in the bay, where they were given a fair start, the tug following

them in to near the goal, which was at the beach in the cove previously mentioned.

From every point in St. Movadu, along the shores of the cove, upon the bluffs, on the tops of houses, and at distances from which the race could only be witnessed through the aid of field glasses, people stood in such numbers as the places could possibly accommodate.

The canoes started from the buoy with a dash that seemed to make them lift from the waters as if they were flying fish. Then they settled to the work, and came careering over the rippling surface of the bay like a string of thoroughbreds at a Derby race. They appeared almost as small as flying fish in the distance, but rapidly increased in size as they advanced, foaming at each prow.

As nearer and nearer they came, and the people were enabled to distinguish the colors worn by the oarsmen of each canoe, choices were made and wagers were laid among those on the shore according to fancy.

As the canoes entered the cove, they were almost perfectly aligned, and it could be seen that the streaming faces of the Indians exhibited a deep eagerness to win the race. There were yet about five-hundred feet between the bows of the canoes and the goal of the race.

At this point a canoe at the center bore gracefully to the front, the two on either side feathering to the rear as the jag of a spear, the fleet shaping like the flight of wild geese. The shining muscles and strained sinews of every Indian stood out like carvings in bas-relief, but the spear shape was not lost until its point touched the sands, and then, from the mere release of intense interest that had held the great throng of witnesses to the strange scene, there went up a simultaneous shout from all the immense throng except the panting contestants, who flung themselves upon the sands, into the edge of the water, and in the bottoms of their canoes, as if utterly exhausted from their exertions.

Major Stamina was wildly exultant. He had supplied the feature of the day.

"And no mistake."

CHAPTER VII.

The Ajax Club.

I walked by the sea and picked up a shell,
  Thrown out on the scalloped shore,
And listened to hear what it could tell—
  It crooned the city's dull roar
I threw it far back in the foaming sea;
  It's song was a dreary drone;
A story of sorrow and pain to me—
  The memory of a moan

—*Ita Est.*

"Humming, ain't she, major?"

"Say, my son, this is the biggest proposition that ever struck the earth, and we are fairly in it."

That was the beginning of a conversation between Van Waters and Major Stamina one fine morning in September, about the time when St. Movadu had reached the zenith of her wonderful start. The major stood upon the marble steps at the Duncan avenue front of the St. Movadu National bank, and had been looking in every direction with evident satisfaction, for the major's local patriotism—and all other kinds of patriotism, as to that—

was immeasurable. He had seen the beautiful little city grow up all around him, had been a potent factor in it all, and naturally he was pleased and proud.

Indeed, Newton Morse's foresight in the selection of the spot, and his money to give it the start, had only made the work of these other two men possible, for otherwise it might be said that they had built the city, Stamina by his wonderful work as a schemer for what should be done, and his ability to make people see the advantages of the situation and induce them to invest; Van Waters with his brilliant and incisive newspaper, that had gone gossiping to the ends of the earth, picking up men of all kinds, who love to be at the building of something, and leading them to the place.

Van Waters stepped up beside Major Stamina, and standing there together they looked down the broad avenue to where it ended at the great dock alongside of which lay craft from every quarter of the globe, with hundreds of busy stevedores, longshoremen, shipping clerks, sailors and all that, engaged about the vessels and among the mighty piles of freight and merchandise that the ships were receiving and discharging.

On both sides of the avenue tall blocks of widely

varying styles of business architecture, walled the wide way. Hurrying and business-bent streams of men, women in beautiful costumes, carriages, omnibuses, drays, and other vehicles, bright and cosmopolitan looking, street cars, driven by electricity or drawn by cable—all the signs of a great business mart, were before those two men, who had stopped to breathe and gossip a minute and who also looked toward the other end of the avenue, which continuing for some distance with the same characteristics, began to break at last, toward the hills, with the handsome homes and lawns that faced the avenue sides, until that thoroughfare had climbed a mighty hill upon which shone the facades of institutions of learning, many churches, a grand theatre and a public library, with porticos and pillars, the crown of an acropolis.

Covering two floors of the bank building, upon whose steps these men stood, were the rooms of the Ajax club, an organization that had begun in an ambitious way as soon as St. Movadu had obtained a fair start, its membership composed largely of the brightest and most enterprising men of the city, not only for the general purpose for which gentlemen's clubs are usually organized,

but really more for the purpose of advancing the city's material interests.

Van Waters and Stamina were both members and directors of this club. Van Waters had originated the idea of it, and he had been honored by being allowed to select a name for it. Facetiously and with the forcible spirit of the man, he had called it "Ajax," "because," he said, "it will defy the lightning, or any other element." He discovered afterward that there was one thing at least that it could not defy, successfully.

This club caused the printing and circulation of documents, profusely illustrated with half-tone engravings, of attractive features of the place and vicinity, and portraits of leading men. It was always prepared to take hold of, receive, feast and fill any capitalist, statesman or other, more or less distinguished, or important person, who might visit St. Movadu, and impress him. It gathered in, now and then, a star actor or lecturer, that the club believed would talk in glowing terms about St. Movadu on his travels. And then the club had set days —or rather evenings—for functions among its own members, and "ladies' day" came once a month, when the fair ones, young and old, the leading spirits of society, were

entertained with music and ices, and distinguished attention, by the club members.

Alas! "Society" had gotten into this well-intended club, and the thought and fact which elicited the exclamation at the beginning of this sentence, are and were that this was the kind of society that so many times, in young western cities, grows too suddenly, and with it a lot of mushroom, toad-stool stuff, the product of the newly rich; the alleged "400;" the sublimation of pitiful parvenuism, that makes sensible people sick, after such sens' le people have laughed sufficiently at the painful absurdities of the prancing ninnies.

"Everything going ahead great, old man," said Major Stamina, slapping Van Waters familiarly on the shoulder.

And it should here be explained that Major Stamina's offices were in the bank building, together with the offices of numbers of other real estate men, lawyers, doctors and dentists, but it was only for a few moments every day that Stamina saw his splendid and well systematized offices; where he kept several clerks, bookkeepers, typewriters and the like at work. The open air was his most used office. He was a man of deeds, and push, and energy, and the outside, in his strong buggy, behind his dull-

looking but serviceable flea-bitten roan, was his field of performance.

"Yes, indeed," replied Van Waters. "It begins to look as if we could take a rest now for a while, major."

"Rest! Great heavens, man, I don't want to rest! I ain't tired. I want to see this town grow so big that we won't have room between here and the mountains to build it on. And that's what she's going to do too."

"My faith has never wavered for an instant, but—"

"But what? Why, bless your life, man, if it hadn't been for you and the "Times" St. Movadu wouldn't be as much as a hole in the woods."

"There are a whole lot of things worrying me, major."

"Well, then, let's go and take a drink. I'll take a cigar and you can take champagne. I've noticed that champagne has done you a sight of good many a time. Braced you up for the time being, and braced you for a long time after it had made you sick and you'd got over it."

"This election is bothering me, major. The time has come when we've got to take every part of the city management out of the hands of fellows who are getting hold of it to trade on, select the officials and rob the taxpayers. These mining camp features must be blotted

out. St. Movadu has got beyond that, and moreover, we don't want to have any of the dive political boss system fastened on to us."

"That's all right, old man, you handle that end of the show. You can do it and I'll stand by you."

"Yes, but the devil of it is, major, I'm getting decidedly tired of doing all that sort of thing without any sort of gratitude for it from any source—and in fact being treated as if I were hired to do all that is done through the "Times" without any hope of anything but my salary."

"What do you want? Want to go to Congress?"

"Congress be blasted! No, I want something safe for the future. And I want a chance, while I'm making great men of such dod-gasted poor material, to get a solid hold on the earth."

"Well, I thought if you wanted to go to Congress we'd send you; but what the devil we'd do while you were off there rusticating around, so to speak, I don't know. What's the matter with your business? Ain't you making money?"

"You are so all-of-a-sudden, and going it all the time that you don't see the situation, but then why should

you? I can't expect you to be bothered with my interests, old man."

"But I will. What's the matter?"

"Well, the fact is just this. You know I'm no business man. They pay me a good salary over yonder, and then send every subscription paper that is started, to build this, that and the other, or to advance every blooming scheme on earth—they send 'em to me."

"Who does?"

"The company."

"Tell 'em to go to Guinea."

"But they won't go. Meantime the company is getting hold of all the stock of the "Times,"and now that Newton Morse has quit business, gone to Europe, studying grammar and putting on airs, they have begun to think that I am getting along too well and they are fixing to freeze me out."

"Say, Van Waters, in these days I'm prepared to believe almost anything about them fool critters, that comes with any degree of authenticity, but I want to tell you, old man, that you are pushing me just a leetle too far on this. Why, man, them critters can't be that blind to their own interests—not to speak of gratitude."

"Tnere are two things, yea three—to plagiarize Solomon a little—that are too opaque for their devotees to see through fairly. These are religious bigotry, avariciousness and shoddy society."

"Well, what's that got to do with you?"

"A great deal in this instance. Old Grayhunt, the new president, represents religious bigotry; Jim Keen, the secretary, represents avariciousness, and Watt Phelps, the treasurer, represents shoddy aristocracy—or at least his wife does, and she comes very near bossing the entire job."

"But say, Van, you've got more religion of the right kind in your little finger than old Grayhunt has in his whole carcass. Keen never had five dollars in his life until Morse brought him here and gave him some stock, and Watt Phelps was born a mule-skinner, and his wife's mother was a char-woman in Chicago, to my certain knowledge, descended from a long line of wharf-rats, so far back as the rats know."

"But can't you see, major, that all this only makes the matter worse?"

"Say, Van, lets go get that drink. You need it, and you'll drive me to some bad habit yet."

"All right, I'll go."

"Where'll we go?"

"Down to Kingsbury's. That fellow has developed in a mighty peculiar way. Remember in the old days when he kept a real decent grocery store down there where Samson's block is now?"

"Yes."

"And he took to running a saloon?"

"Yes."

"What do you reckon he ever did that for?"

"To make money, I suppose."

"That's it, and he's done it. He puts every dollar he clears into town lots, too. Sensible in that. I reckon he's worth a cool hundred thousand."

"In town lots?"

"Yes."

"Tell you another thing. I believe one of the things that made him go into the saloon business was to get more leisure to sit down and talk to Jack Lacy."

"But Jack has been straight for a long time now."

"Yes, but he spends every minute he can spare down there talking to Kingsbury, if it isn't the right time of day

for him to see that pooty school-marm. Bet he's there now."

By this time Van and the major had reached Kingsbury's. They passed through a side door and into a little private room, of which there were several in the place, all of them furnished richly, with mahogany tables, easy and heavy chairs, moquet carpets, and the walls adorned with excellent engravings, expensively framed. The main establishment, which also contained a number of the finest billiard tables, was a wonder of art in the different lines necessary to its furnishing, but as we will have no special business there, and shall spend no time in that part of the place, the description of it will be dismissed with the statement, that it was one of the most gorgeous establishments of its kind known in any city of the west, where the most extravagantly superb liquor saloons in the world are to be found. All of which proves that in no other business is money so copiously spent as in the bar-rooms of American cities, nor so profusely used to make these places attractive, and to out-rival each other.

Van Waters and Major Stamina seated themselves at

the table of the room they occupied, the major having first touched the button to an electric annunciator.

A waiter appeared immediately and Major Stamina said:

"Bring me a light perfecto. What'll you have, Van?"

"The same thing; only let mine be strong."

"The dickens. I thought you were going to have some wine?"

"No, thank you. I just want to rest and smoke and have a little further talk, major."

"Well, I'm really glad of it, though you had blame nigh provoked me into getting somebody to take a drink for me."

Meantime the servant had appeared with the two cigars, in a glass, and that of either man was easily chosen by its color. The cigars were lighted and Van Waters changed his position to a recumbent one on a sofa, where he lazily smoked. Major Stamina, who probably had never lain down in his life, except when he deliberately went to bed to sleep, retained his position."

"Ladies' day at the club yesterday," Van Waters sententiously remarked.

"Yes. Didn't see you there."

"I was there, only a few minutes."

"Didn't stay long myself, and I didn't see Mrs. Van and Grace."

"No; they've quit going."

"That daughter Grace of yours is getting to be a splendid woman."

"Yes, I call her my grand-daughter."

"Oh, I'd bet on you for that, but then she is a grand girl."

"The pride and ambition of my life."

"But why have they quit going?"

"Got too toney for them."

"Say, Van, that Phelps woman will have to be taken down a button-hole or two. She is raising old Ned in this town among the women. People that are not in her so-called set are worried a heap by her. Of course she ain't bothering me any, but I hate to see such frippery beggar-on-horseback business."

"You seem to hit the keynote every time. How do you do it, major?"

"I don't know—just naturally see things somehow."

"Well, to be candid with you, major, that is one of the things that have been annoying me, and I'm ashamed to

own it to myself. For the truth is that individually I don't care anything more about that sort of cattle than I do about a stray dog. Fact is I'm a little leery of a dog that I don't know."

"Heap of church at the bottom of it, I think."

"Well, yes, and no. Myself and family have been Episcopalians for generations. I don't remember when I couldn't recite from memory the creed and catechism, Litany and all that sort of thing, and when Dr. Hamilton came here to establish St. Paul's parish and his little Episcopal chapel, I went into the matter heart and soul—"

"As usual—"

"No, it seemed more like we could have something of the nature that I was familiar with, and for Nan and Grace's sake, too—more especially, in fact, I wanted it. But some of these blame fool women—Phelps and her following—took it into their heads that it would be fashionable, exclusive, toney, or something of that sort, and though they didn't know the Morning Service from the Odes of Anacreon, blame me if they didn't take possession of the whole thing and proceed at once to make the house of the Lord on the Episcopal side, too sultry alto-

gether for anything this side of the place that churches are supposed to save people from."

"House steam-heated?" asked the major with a chuckle.

"No, hot-air. There was Ada Benson, for instance, as sweet and pure a girl as there is on the earth, born and bred an Episcopalian; they snubbed her because she was only a school-teacher, and in every possible direction that outfit have made the town a misery to women who don't belong to what they call their set, and the worst of it is that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred this bevy of shoddyites are not anywhere near as well-bred, intelligent and accomplished as the people they are persecuting. They've carried this thing into Ladies' Day at the club, and have, as a consequence, extended it to the husbands and sweethearts of the ostracised women. Poor old Jack Lacy, for instance, you never see him at the club now-a-days, and you know he was the life of everything in the good old times, when we were all alike here, and before those who have got rich on town lots, grew to be better than you and me and the men who have done the work. We have been busy building a city, they have profited by our achievement, and while we have been at

that they have been erecting a nasty little '400' around us to ostracise our families."

"Well, what are you going to do about it?" queried the major in a sad sort of way.

"Nothing, except that I'll keep my contingent out of it, and I'll give it to 'em in the 'Times,' together with the religious bigotry business."

"I see you have been doing some of that already, and that is what is getting old Grayhunt and company down on you. Well, go it, old man, and if they work you out of the 'Times' we'll give you another newspaper."

* * * * * * *

"Whoop! I want to lick a home-made dude!" was an exclamation that came in the tones of a man wildly drunk, from the main hall of the saloon.

"Great heavens!" exclaimed Van Waters, "there is Jack Lacy on another drunk."

"Too bad, too bad," almost groaned the major. But he touched the button of the annunciator and when the servant showed his face, the major said:

"Go and tell Mr. Lacy I want to see him."

In less than a minute Jack Lacy burst in at the door exclaiming in a jolly drunken man's way:

"Hello, major! How're you, Van? Le's take a drink?"

"No, you wont," coolly remarked the major. "You've had enough now to make the Sphinx of Egypt drunk, and I want you to quit." He touched the bell-push again.

"This will make your friends feel awful, Jack. You have been straight so long," said Van Waters.

"Don't care a d——n," said the boozy Jack. "They've been imposing on my sweetheart, an' I want to lick somebody."

"S—h! That's no way to talk," said Van Waters, and at the same moment the servant had been in and the major had told him to ring for a carriage.

The conversation that ensued between the three men was only of the character necessary to quiet Lacy, on the part of the major and Van Waters, and drunken expostulations from Jack, who soon relented. The carriage was at the door, and the three men entered and drove away.

"Society" had even touched poor Jack Lacy with its cruel fingers.

CHAPTER VIII.

A Close Call.

The tiger's cub was gentle, and it played with a little child;
Its feet were velvet cushions, and its brown eyes meek and mild;
The changes came so softly that its playmate had not seen
The cruel claws in velvet and the brown eyes glinting green;
Then came a gallant lancer—a good, gray man, and bold,
Who slew the snarling tiger with his gleaming spear of gold.

—*The Spear of Gold.*

Major Stamina and Van Waters landed poor Jack at a place of comfort and safety that proved to be the greatest blessing of Lacy's physical life, for with his really good intentions and with his pure and intense love for Ada Benson he afterward weathered life's storms in a good strong way that was satisfactory to himself and his friends.

Before it could be noised abroad in St. Movadu that Lacy had been misled into another of his old tilts with that enemy who can down a king, and often has done so, Ada had been informed that it had become necessary for Mr. Lacy to leave, immediately, on a very important errand

for the "Times" on which he had been working some months as an alert and efficient reporter, and as quickly as the mail could return Miss Benson would receive letters from Mr. Lacy's own hand.

A faithful man was sent with Lacy by steamer and rail to a hot springs sanitarium among the mountains, and after a week there, in charge of a fatherly old physician, a friend for many years of Major Stamina, fully informed of all the particulars and necessities of the occasion, Lacy came out once more as bright as a dollar, and armed forever against the further attacks of the insidious foe that had so often taken him down, strong man as he was, like the many-armed octopus of the deep gathers the best swimmers and the strongest fighter in its slimy tentacles.

Letters that were white lies came plentifully from Jack, and were reinforced by the major and Van Waters, and so Lacy's last failure in the path of steadiness was not known to Ada until many years afterward, when the little fraud was laughed at because it was so old and tottering and weakened and forgiveable.

Meantime, during Lacy's absence, occurred the most

important municipal election that St. Movadu had ever had or probably ever will have.

The little city had arisen above the "camp" condition, and yet there was a strong remnant of it dangerous to its future.

The question that existed was whether or not the whisky and gambling and dive element should continue to carry on, almost uncontrolled, and in fact be largely the directors of the city's municipal and financial affairs.

In such a young city the construction of sewers, the multiplying of lighting apparatus, the improvement of streets, the increase of the fire and police departments, the manipulation of all this and more, the money to be handled and the "jobs" involved, were of course tempting to the jobbers and dangerous to the taxpayers.

Van Waters had been watching all this with a jealous eye to the city's interests, and through his wide-awake reporters, every one of whom were keen detectives, and his own incisive perception, had the matter well in hand.

The man McManus, who aspired to be the political boss on the questionable side, was the owner of a big saloon that was the resort of the negro "crap pitcher," the tin-horn gambler, the brazen woman of the town out for

a jamboree, the hobo and the loafer, with a sprinkling of a class that was only bad because of the depths to which whisky and morphine had flung them, the poor sufferers from habits that had shattered their nerves and who gathered there in hopes of obtaining, by some means, a surcease for a few hours from their nervous agony. Besides, he had, adjoining, a dance hall, a gambling place, and a variety show, that attracted all of the elements, mostly of the lowest class, that haunt such places.

Notwithstanding such possessions and the management of them through men much of his character, usually faithful men in their way, McManus had some of the attributes of a decent man. He was well-dressed, drank but little himself, was fairly educated and possessed of more than ordinary intelligence.

There are those who cannot understand this; for the very reason that having been brought up in a moral atmosphere they are unable to comprehend the coalescence of the one with the other.

The reformed prize-fighter, who by something akin to a miracle becomes imbued with Christianity, and learns the story of the gentle Nazarene, can tell it better to the class

he associates with than the most eloquent man that ever preached.

The Salvation army does more good in the purlieus wherein it works than the members of the finest plush upholstered church, because the souls the Salvation army seeks believe more in the sincerity and kinship of those who come to them with songs set to the tunes of the streets.

McManus and Van Waters, in the building up of St. Movadu, had met on the common ground of St. Movadu's primitive interests and, in a way, they had become friends. But Van Waters and McManus were both men of sufficient sense to see where even so slight a friendship as theirs must end on a high moral plane.

Two tickets for mayor and city council-men had been nominated, the one representing the better element of the people and the other the element of McManus, which latter must have a government that would at least blink at the jobbers.

How was the baser element to be strenuously and successfully opposed?

Van Waters knew that it was possible only through his newspaper. He was a patriot and hesitated not. He

had the matter well in hand, knew all of its details and ramifications, and brave and true man that he was he did not hesitate to take the most effective steps.

He printed the facts, editorially and otherwise, in his paper, concerning McManus' schemes. That very astute politician of the lower order had registered every disreputable character that he had any influence over until he had actually accumulated something over three hundred registration certificates, and by means known to every scheming ward politician, where the Australian ballot system prevails, he had secured enough of these vouchers, which, placed in the hands of his hirelings, would be the balance of power in the coming election.

Van Waters had discovered all this; "had it down fine," as the slang of the day went, and exposed the whole thing in the "Times." This was on the day but one preceding the election, and besides the general exposure he printed elsewhere in numerous places in his paper the following card in black letters:

"It is known to the 'Times' that certain individuals have arranged to steal the coming city election by the use of fraudulent registration certificates. This is to inform those persons that their entire plan is known, and if one or

more of said fraudulent registration certificates are used, as proposed, the 'Times,' which has a full corps of capable reporters on duty in the premises, will land every individual who has anything to do with the matter in state's prison."

On the evening following the publication of these things, McManus came to the office of the 'Times.' He had been there often before and knew well enough where the desk of the editor-in-chief was. Passing through the rooms of the reporters he went to the desk of the editor, who was engaged about his regular duties, and drew up a chair, seating himself in a familiar way thereon.

There was only one other person—a reporter—a bright young Jew, in the rooms, and he not in that particular office.

"Good evening, Van."

"Good evening, Mac," were the brief salutations.

Then after a few moments, in which Van Waters pushed his pencil with almost unusual vigor, he halted, threw down the writing utensil on his manuscript and quietly asked:

"Want to see me about anything in particular?"

"Rather particular," returned McManus.

"Go ahead," said Van Waters.

"Some pretty hard things the 'Times' said about me this morning."

"Well, I 'spose they are—from your standpoint, Mac, but they go."

"I know they go, Van, and that's the reason I have come to see you."

Van fingered nervously with the drawer in his desk.

"Don't bother about that, Van; you and I are not going to have any trouble. Leave your gun where it is," and Van swung back his desk chair to its full tilt.

"Go on," he said.

"Well, it is this, Van; I know if this thing keeps up that either you or I will get killed. I don't want to kill you, and I don't believe you want to kill me. The reason I don't want to kill you is because I like you and you are a good citizen. Maybe you don't believe this, but here is something that I know you will believe. If I were to hurt you, popular as you are in this city, it would do me great injury. It would ruin my business and I'd make nothing in the end; therefore, I have come here to tell you that you can have those registration certificates

and destroy them, although they have cost me a pretty fair dollar or so."

Van Waters' magnanimity was touched and he said:

"Well, when it comes to that, old man, if you tell me you'll destroy the certificates, that settles it. I'll take your word for it."

"No," said McManus, "take a man and go with me to my place and we'll destroy them together. I know you and I know you will go."

"I don't want anybody with me," said Van Waters, taking the improved Smith & Wesson from the drawer and putting it in his hip pocket.

"But I'd rather you would have somebody with you," continued McManus. "Men have heart disease and all such things as that. I would rather you would have somebody along."

"Will you go, Roth?" queried Van Waters to the young Jew on the other side of the partition, and who, he knew, had heard every word that had passed.

"Go with you anywhere," said the loyal young Hebrew, and in less time than it takes to tell it the three were on the sidewalk bent for the McManus club dive.

They arrived there. It was about 10 o'clock at night

and the place was in full fume. The air was loaded with the smoke of all kinds of cigars from the best to the worst, including the smoke of pipes. There was the clink of glasses; the poor voice of the serio-comic singer could be heard from the variety hall, and the click of chips from the gambling table, as well as the call of the roulette singer with something about "black and white." There were the "crap" players, "Come, good old number," and every one of the sounds of such a place.

Men stood astonished to see the proprietor of the dive and one they deemed his deadliest enemy come in arm-in-arm.

Roth and Van Waters halted at the end of the counter, and McManus went back between the counter and the whisky shelves to the safe, which he opened, taking therefrom two large packages of elastic-bound paper slips. He beckoned to a man at the desk, who followed him, and the four entered a narrow but well-lit passage and turned into a handsomely out-fitted apartment, the boss' private room in the place. There was a smouldering coal fire in the grate, the place was as quiet as possible, considering the surroundings and the thin walls. They sat at a table. The boss cut the gum bands on the

paper packages, showed what they were and then laid them on the slow coals, where they crumpled, crinkled and blazed, and in a few minutes all that was left was a few scorched ends of the registration certificates.

Then McManus arose, caught Van Waters by the hand and said:

"That's to you and me and our lives, old man. I know you and you know me."

"Good. Have something with me. Touch the bell for a couple of quarts, Roth, old boy," and the four drank the two quarts, after they had been brought in by a waiter.

During the libations there was talk on general subjects. Then, escorted to the front door by McManus and his friend, Van Waters and "Roth"—which was his name for short—the two newspaper men went back quietly to their work, and the next day the "Times'" ticket was elected by about three hundred majority.

That was business.

CHAPTER IX.

"The Kicker."

These things is much too much for me;
It's broke my heart in two;
It's ru'nous to the country,
An' it ain't a-gwine to do.

—*The Kentuckian's Lament.*

"High, Jack and the Game—three to you' one—puts me out, suh. Lemme tell you, young man, once mo' that a Kaintucky gentleman who larned to play seven-up straddle of a sycamo' log, with a monst'us good player, suh, is not the kind of a person for you to tackle in this game. You can't even amuse me, suh. But I am constantly amused in other ways so it matters very little in this instance, suh."

So spoke "The Kicker" as James Hiram Young was generally called in St. Movadu by those who knew him familiarly. On the present occasion he was occupied with one Cyrus Small in a side room at Kingsbury's, playing what used to be the "National Game of Kentucky," otherwise "old sledge" or "seven up."

This Mr. Young, alias "The Kicker," was a grizzled old fellow, plainly dressed, but with linen always spotless, notwithstanding the fact that he chewed tobacco with as much earnestness and evident satisfaction as a cow does her cud, while his shoes were always as shiney as the "dago," under the awning on the outside, could make them.

Mr. Young almost lived in the card rooms at Kingsbury's, and he was as profoundly devoted to the "History of the Four Kings" as a bookworm is to his books.

Mr. Young would play any game of cards known to mankind with any comer, "for dollars or doughnuts," or even for fun, until—if playing for fun—he found his opponent an unequal match.

The latter he found Mr. Cy Small to be, and hence abruptly closed the game mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, with the very candid remark that that individual could not amuse him. There were two or three other men sitting about the room, and Mr. Young went on to say;—addressing them:

"As I was remarking, gentlemen, there's lots of other things to amuse one, about this town. For instance, gentlemen, take old John Mackabee, the jestice of the

peace up-sta'rs here. He's got a picture up thar of Gin'l Grant without any name on it. The old man thinks he looks like Grant, and maybe he does. I dunno. I never saw Gin'l Grant but once in my life, and I was in such a hurry then that I had no chance to scan his features very much. That was on the second day of Shiloh battle, and I had business—pressing business—at a place called Corinth, some few miles further south. But as I was remarking, the old judge thinks he looks like Grant, and if you are at any time in real need of a tol'able fair seegyar jist go up and ask the old man, in a sort of a keerless sort of a way, whar he got such an excellent portrait of himself. Or, if you don't want to make it quite that co'se, jest tell him how much the picture of Grant looks like him. If old Mack don't offer you one of them tol'able fair seegyars, inside of less than a minute, come back here and call up a quart of Pom-Sec on the undersigned.

"In this the old man Mack reminds me somehow of all the blamed fools who are holding on to town lots in this place, with the notion that about a year from now they will sell 'em at figgers that mean the same as coverin' the ground with twenty dollar bills.

"Lemme tell you, gentlemen, befo' the end of another

year, if you can sell town lots here for ten dollars an acre, spot cash, I'll swim the bay and pull a tug."

This last remark was too much for the party.

"Why don't you hire a hall?"

"Give us a rest, old Kick."

"Take a tumble."

And such like trite but expressive slang saluted the ears of Mr. Young. Yet he faltered not.

"All right, gentlemen," he continued; "but you've heerd Jeemes Hiram Young toot his hawn, and you kin keep on accumulating dirt; but you'll heve it for sale at jedgment, I tell you, if the sheriff don't sell it for you soonah."

"Say, you make me sick," said Mr. Cy Small as he rose to go.

"Yes, sah, an' you make me sick at seven up," retorted Mr. Young. "But if you don't hold on to your lots any better than you hold a hand at kyards you won't have no lots to lose at the time specified."

"Well, I don't make my living at playing cards," returned Mr. Small as he passed out.

"From your onary looks one would think you did,

considerin' how you play," was Mr. James Hiram Young's chasing shot.

"Tell you what it is, gentlemen," said Mr. Young, who then paused.

"Well, what is it?" came from one of the others.

"It's no use, I reckon," said Young. "You fellows don't know enough to know when to let go."

Two of the other men passed into the main room of the saloon, and Mr. Young was left with the remaining individual, who seemed disposed to listen.

Young's croakings amused him.

"Mr. Talcott," said Young, addressing his last man, "it's a waste of raw material talking to these suckers about this whoop-em-up place. But lemme tell you; I've been through more mining camp flare-ups and real estate booms than I can recollect, and no mo' of 'em will ketch Jeemes Hiram. What's to make a town hyah? Thar ain't no pay roll, except the work on streets and such like; and the tax-payers pay that. Whar's ther any factories or the like of that? Not hyar. Every fellow that's got a few dollars is blowing himself in on town lots and waiting to sell for big figures. The top notch has been reached, suh, and the ball's ovah."

"Do you really think so?" interjected Mr. Talcott.

"Think so? I know so," returned Mr. Young. "There's too blamed much of everything hyar, suh, except common, every day horse sense, suh. Too much religion—of its kind. The kind that would make the Apostles weep to see how much hypocrisy and sham and selfishness thar is in it, suh. Thar's too much building for the number of people and the lack of use for the houses. Thar's too much buying and selling on credit. Thar's too much ground platted for miles and miles around town. Thar's too much champagne drunk by people that never knew the taste of it a year ago, suh. And there's too much shoddyism, suh.

"Listen at them young roosters out thar drinking Pom Sec at the countah, like haugs at a trough, and jingling ther money on the boa'd like it grew on trees. They'll see the day—an' mighty soon—when they'll be glad to see an angel in the shape of a stranger who will come along and set up plain, common, cookin' whisky; an' them angels will be monst'ous skeerce. You heah Jeemes Hiram howlin'. Have a game of crib?"

Mr. Talcott was willing.

CHAPTER X.

Duncan's Return.

The sun just tipped the trees with light,
Their lengthening shadows fell by mine,
And in the far-off distance, bright
I saw the gleaming steeples shine
And sun-set gild the waving pine.

—*My Village Home.*

Society had been doing its peculiar work in every direction in St. Movadu. It had set up its churches, or rather its idols; it had ostracised by its own insidious and invidious ways women whose clothes were not au fait and men who thought out loud, yet not in its thin vein. There had really gotten to be stratum of society that worked cruelly from top to bottom.

One day at Mrs. Phelps' there was quite a gathering of the particular set that affected Mrs. Phelps, and which she affected. Among these were Mrs. Pugh and her two daughters. They were almost too nice for anything on earth. There were others that this story cannot afford to manipulate personally, for the story has some strong

ambitions, and except for the same purpose that the machinist's "waste" is used about a train of cars, to clean the engine and wipe off surplus, old, spoiled grease, the personnel of these other people will be avoided as much as possible.

Little Miss Fan Pugh remarked to Mrs. Phelps that she couldn't understand what so many, even fairly respectable men in the city, could see about that stuck-up school-marm, Ada Benson, and Mrs. Pugh said:

"Why, darling, should you bother your head about such people."

Mrs. Phelps, in a complacent way, remarked that Mrs. Pugh was too severe with Miss Fan because the highest class of society frequently discussed live stock that was not even blooded. Then Miss Sally Pugh, the younger of the august Madame Pugh's daughters, simpered: "I think it is well enough to talk of anything on the face of nature, if one had the time to spare, and it was not altogether too disgusting."

There was a rattle and cackle of the smallest kind of that sort of small talk, until finally Mrs. Phelps remarked:

"I see that that shambling old fright, Duncan, has

come back, and some people are treating him as if he was somebody."

"Ada Benson has made him her protege," remarked Miss Fanny Pugh.

"And her delectable sweetheart, Jack Lacy, has taken the coarse old wretch under his special charge," chipped in the other Pugh girl.

"Pah! let us say no more about such people," chimed in the mother of the simpering sisters.

The Pughs, John Charles, his wife, the latter the majestic lieutenant of Madame Phelps, and the two daughters, had arrived at St. Movadu quite early in the settlement of the young city. Mr. Pugh had brought with him some hundreds of dollars that had come to him from some unexpected source, and he had launched with that feeble capital wildly into the early real estate speculations of the phenomenal place. He had been successful in turning town lots quite rapidly, and had become one of the financial pillars of the First National bank of St. Movadu.

The home of the Pugh's was on the eastern extremity of Duncan avenue, perhaps five blocks from the business center of the city, but for one of the females of that estab-

lishment to have attempted to reach such a distance on foot and without the pony and phaeton affected by the family would have been too utterly out of the question.

About the time that the conversation above—if such chatter could be called a conversation—took place, Jack Lacy and Mr. Pugh happened to meet in a friendly way at the bank corner where Major Stamina and Van Waters had held, a few weeks before, the chat which was recorded in an earlier chapter of these chronicles.

With the ostentation that had taken possession of Mr. John Charles Pugh since his successful residence in St. Movadu, he addressed Lacy with the patronizing air generally offered by him to persons whom he attempted to consider far from being his social and business equals.

"Ah, Lacy, been doing anything in the way of verse lately? I have often thought of late that perhaps our city would be doing itself some benefit if it paid more attention to men like yourself who do so much in the way of advertising us by your really attractive literary work."

"The city can save itself any feeling of charitable anxiety on my part in regard to my work. My books seem to be taking care of themselves, and they are certainly taking care of me."

"I thought," returned Mr. Pugh, "that as your poetry is being widely quoted throughout the country, and your stories speak so frequently in advantageous terms of this region and its great resources, it would be doing only a fairness to you to give these facts such public attention as might be of some financial value to you."

"I appreciate your motive of charity, Mr. Pugh, but not being at present in need of charitable attention, you would please me more by dismissing the subject."

"Oh, I meant no harm, I meant no harm," said Mr. Pugh, with a doublet that was a sort of finical habit of the great man, since he had become a bank director, and of reputed wealth, the head of a family particularly remarked for its ultra "elegant" station in fashionable life.

"By the way," somewhat abruptly remarked Lacy, "I have been trying to remember for some time where it was I first met you, Mr. Pugh, and it has just occurred to me. Once, two or three years ago, I was a guest at the Hotel del Monte and it became necessary for me, with a party of other friends, to hire bathing dresses—"

"Great heavens, Lacy, say no more! There is no occasion to recall things like that, and I have no disposition to be arrogant with my wealth—in fact, have only

the kindliest feelings for all people—but there is an influence in my family that possibly may cause me to seem to you purse-proud and over-bearing. I assure you, my dear fellow, it is all only the result of some habits that have grown too rapidly among the more successful settlers of St. Movadu, who had been placed all their lives before in inferior social positions."

"Pugh, I have no desire to recall anything that would be calculated to hurt you or yours, in whatever of social aspirations you may have, contemptible as it all is to me; but I would like to convey to you the fact that there are those with whom I am associated in the warmest terms of friendship who have been pettily annoyed by assumptions of patricianism from sources with which you are acquainted and connected, and I think that this hint may have a tendency to put an end to that. I hope so, at least, and assure you that suggestion is not to be ascribed to a desire on my part or that of any of my friends to ascend to the dizzy heights on the social scale which you and yours now occupy."

After some other little conversation of this character, in a friendly way as to both, the two parted, Jack Lacy having during it all assured the capitalist that that dis-

tinguished individual had nothing to fear from the garrulity of the Bohemian.

The reader may be interested to know that the facts referred to by Lacy concerning Mr. Pugh's residence at the Hotel del Monte were simply these. John Pugh, who had not then so pompously fixed the "Charles" into the longitudinative of his name, was employed at that famous hostelry some years before in charge of the rental and care of the bathing suits used by the guests of the hotel. It was the duty of the then not so august Madame Pugh and her engaging daughters to wash and mend those same hired bathing suits, all four gaining by their combined and comprehensive manipulation of the garments thus for hire to the bathers of that famous resort, something in the nature of a tolerable livelihood.

It happened to be also a fact that Mr. John Charles Pugh had always been possessed with an appetite frequently recurring for liquid stimulants. He had not been a drunkard because his pecuniary capacity lacked sufficient strength and breadth to very frequently purchase the necessary quantity of stimulating beverages to lift him to the exhilerated heights of one who becomes intoxicated, or

sink him to the appalling depths of one who is frequently successful in that way.

Besides this, there was the over-awing presence of his forcible spouse, who was as majestic and august to Mr. John Charles Pugh in the small apartment they occupied upon the grounds of the Hotel del Monte, as she was among the ambitious "400" of St. Movadu.

However, when the occasion occurred that Mr. John Charles Pugh was enabled to secure something in the nature of an occasional imbibition, his manner of obtaining it was to call at a rear side door of the Hotel del Monte and by certain signs and whistlings attract the attention of one of the gentlemen in white who presided at that dispensatory of liquid refreshments, and if the gentleman in white happened at that moment to be sufficiently of a kindly disposition toward Mr. John Charles Pugh, the glass of something so much desired by Pugh was sent to him to the back door by the person who happened to be employed about the bar to perform such errands.

Mr. John Charles Pugh being a menial about the hotel, was not allowed to bring himself into contact with the respectable guests of the hotel.

As to this same Hotel del Monte, pardon, dear reader, a short digression:

Ye who have seen and enjoyed the scenic beauties of the lands beyond the seas; who have sailed up the broad and beautiful Rhine, where ivy-covered castles crown the rugged cliffs; by fair and storied Bingen; and to where the silvery Main joins the mighty stream; where Germania stands guard, and tradition and legend enriches the romance of it all; ye who have stood in Venice on the bridge of the Rialto, or have sailed on Naples' far-famed bay and watched from there the smoke ribbons that stream from the mountain top, fabled as the Cyclopian forge, whence came the thunderbolts of Jove; ye that have wandered among the wonders of the world and the tokens of the ages, where the mighty pyramids and the silent sphinx stand mute yet eloquent witnesses of Ptolemic history. Ye who have loitered amid the ruins of druidical masonry; along by the Isles of Erin, and by the lochs of Scotia; lazed where the sun glints the minarets of mosques and lounged beneath the banyan's shade; ye who have crossed the ocean and the Alps, if you have not seen the rose and vine and orange grown shores of the placid Pacific, down the coast of California, you have

only been led by books, and tales, and have not seen the beauty of entrancing nature at her best, and have not known how genial may be her smiles.

Along that coast, associated with what seems to be almost ancient lore; amid the old missions of the early padres whose adobe walls are falling now, at one point lies the splendid bay of Monterey, an almost encircled pool of old ocean.

Near the opening from the ocean on the south side stands the old seaport town, with its air of sabbath quiet. Further toward the east and north, back a decent distance from the white and easy sloping beach, stands a glorious and modern pile—the Hotel del Monte.

Giant, listless, scattering and scraggy oaks stand here and there, grim and superannuated, waiting with contemptuous contemplation their end, amid such company as fostered and petted palms and voluptuous groupings of other trees and flowers, plants and vines.

The somewhat gently imposing structure lifted among varied and unfamiliar foliage, is a delightful resort, not only because of the strange yet charming surroundings, the genial climate and the air of modern romance, but because the people one meets there, unless of your own

party and importance, are nearly sure to be total strangers to one another. Familiarity is confined to groups; and yet there is an atmosphere of freedom and an absence of supercilliousness.

One hardly expects that in such a place can be such a sordid thing as the business of running the hotel. But hotels never run, in these days, and probably never did in any other day, without those unromantic details.

There is a saloon; but the liquors are sold in the usual business way, and are measured and mixed just as they are in any other gin mill—what a horrid word in such a scene—and there are kitchens, and cooks, dishwashers, laundry people, the barber shops, and in and through all the details of the great hostelry are the favorings, the bickerings, the complaints, and the petty meannesses that exist in any other big hotel, or other great domestic aggregation and establishment.

Among this help was the Pugh contingent. The father had a fairly soft thing in the matter of being a general help, or a sort of aggrandized chore-boy, aside from his bathing suit business, because he was handy and had once helped to pull the general manager of the hotel out of the debris of a railway wreck and tended him

at a nearby station while he lay with a broken leg waiting for the fractured bone to knit together sufficiently to prevent its being jarred apart in the process of transportation to his hotel home, whither he took with him his faithful nurse.

It was thus that Mr. John Pugh, with his domestic aggregation, became established at the Hotel del Monte.

A windfall, however, of a few dollars, a change of base to a young city built in a distan forest, the fortunate turn of some score of town lots, altered to a remarkable degree the social standing of Mr. and Mrs. John Charles Pugh and their two engaging daughters. It had made the difference between renting, washing and mending bathing garments for hire to the habitues of a seaside resort and occupying the position of imposing lights in the firmament of a parvenu society.

Quite a difference!

CHAPTER XI.

Another Rip Van Winkle.

We've had some ups and downs in life,
And growin' sorter old,
With hearts as warm as ever,
And they never will git cold,
So fur as him and me's consarned;
Not even over thar,
When all are called to answer
At the final jedgement bar.

—*Old Mart and Me.*

The railroad had not done all for St. Movadu that the place had expected, and that had been promised by that corporation.

An undercurrent of anxiety and fear had begun to be felt. Some of those who had "made their stake" were quietly "going to the springs" and not returning. Several business failures had occurred, and old Dan Duncan had drifted back to St. Movadu to see something about the town lots he had bought in that place, out of the vast amount of land which he had once owned and sold to be the site of a city.

Major Stamina with all his pluck and perseverance had fought with a bravery that was his own the threatening depression, and many had been the serious and anxious consultations between himself and sanguine Van Waters, who never for a moment had dropped his roseate ways of presenting in his newspaper the beauties, and possibilities of St. Movadu and its surroundings.

Nevertheless the fact that bad news always travels swiftly had by this time reached those most deeply interested.

It had been generally understood in the city that Dan Duncan, unaccustomed to the use of large sums of money, had in San Francisco and other cities ridden like the proverbial beggar on horseback to the devil, and that there was nothing left of the one hundred thousand dollars that had been paid to him for the land upon which this ambitious city had been built, saving the few lots he had bought at Major Stamina's suggestion.

Duncan, however, had a wiser head than he had been generally credited with; and yet he had a still tongue. Upon his arrival he took quarters at the Woodworth house, the same hotel where Jack Lacy was domiciled.

Lacy took an interest in the old man. He saw that there were signs of weakness and illness about him, and used his influence, which was almost the same as that of a son, with the old proprietor of the house to place Duncan in a room adjoining his own.

In his Bohemian way, despite his faithful work as a reporter on the "Times," and as a writer of novels and poems, he always found plenty of leisure, and thus he and Duncan wandered much over the city, the old man in constant wonder at the changes that had been wrought.

Here was, in truth, another Rip Van Winkle, but better than Irving's old man, for here and there he had on the plat which he carried with him, obtained from the town-site company, dotted with much pleasure to himself the little pieces of ground that were all his own.

One day Duncan, in a backward and bashful sort of way, denied himself the ordinary round about the city with his new-found friend. That day and all the next he moped about the office of the Woodworth house, and on the third day did not leave his room. He persisted in declaring that he was not very ill, but Jack, anxious about him, brought Dr. Somerset to see him, and the doctor, with perhaps more interest in Jack Lacy's concern than

in the old man's health, gave the ancient rancher a closer attention than he perhaps otherwise would have done, believing that Duncan was not seriously ill.

Old Duncan's weakness increased, however, until he became actually bedridden, and then Lacy told Ada Benson all about him, and meekly suggested that she come and see him.

This she was quick to do, and at once became interested in the invalid, with an earnestness that even astonished Lacy.

"I am strangely drawn toward your old friend," she said, "and I want him to get well."

But Duncan became weaker as the days went by.

He seemed grateful, in his simple way, for her attentions, and would call Lacy and Ada "son" and "honey."

This illness of the old man's, under the constant attention of the lovers, had gone on perhaps a week, when, notwithstanding the fact that he had often heard the name of "Ada," he arose upon his elbow one evening strongly excited, when, perhaps for the first time, he had noticed her additional name of Benson.

He gazed for a moment, wildly, into her face and then

falling back upon his pillow, overcome by weakness, beckoned to Jack and said:

"I want to talk with you, when I'm stronger, upon a serious subject of importance to you and your sweetheart."

And that was the beginning of the end.

CHAPTER XII.

An Opera Opening.

'Neath this broad dome night after night
For many a coming year;
'Neath all the golden, dazzling light
From yon bright chandelier,
Shall come the man, the maid, the dame,
To drink from pleasure's cup,
And see the actor strive for fame
And hold the mirror up.

—*A Modern Temple.*

The lovers of art, they of Bohemian tastes, who were not a few in St. Movadu, had watched the construction of the new opera house, from the day "ground was broken" for the excavation of its basement, until the facades rose high, handsome, chaste and commanding.

The interior of the imposing building was finished in the excellent woods, fir, cedar and pine, of the region, while other lands had been drawn upon for the great plates of glass, the carpetings, tapestries, draperies, lighting and ventilating apparatus, and general furnishings of this temple of the muses.

Every step toward the completion of the superb edifice had been anxiously watched, and the day of its opening and dedication had at last arrived.

This was a gala day in St. Movadu. Nearly every adult person in the city, and those who were nearing manhood and womanhood, were deeply interested; most deeply those who were lovers of art, for such a theatre is always a nucleus of many arts. The highest art in architecture had been called to the construction and ornamentation of the superstructure, in this instance; the art of weaving beautiful hangings and carpets for the interior furnishings; the art of painting grand pictures that were hung upon the walls; the art of carving marble into the imagery of breathing life for the statues and statuettes in niches about the foyer. Then were to come the arts of music and acting, and with these, whatever of art that was necessary in the mechanical and scenic accessories of the operas and dramas to be produced.

Thus the art loving element of St. Movadu was wide awake for the occasion.

The settlement of western cities draws from the population of the enlightened world. And even from some of those portions of this mundane ball that do not come

with good warrant, under this complimentary head. Sons and daughters of excellent families, sometimes financially strained, have frequently, under the advice of the Chappaquan sage, gone to western—often very far western—towns and cities, in search of health or fortune, or both; taking with them the accomplishments and excellent tastes acquired in the pure and wholesome homes they had left in the rose-tinted and magnolia bowered south, or the prim and intellectual east. Thus St. Movadu, with its ten thousand stirring people, had a large contingent of those lovers of art and good taste and a still larger contingent of the nouveaux riches, that, parvenu-like, made much pretense in the same direction. Far more pretense indeed, than others; for their assumptions in this direction were all pretense; except in a few individual instances, where the mania for show and the constant attempt at arrogance had not been able to overcome the in-born artistic proclivities of some young member of such a household.

Besides those who were delighted over the completion of the opera house because of the pleasure it would bring, were those who regarded the handsome building as an architectural addition that would, in its way, advance their

pecuniary interests, as an attractive ornament to the young city.

In that was a sort of patriotism, and selfish though it generally was, it was far more commendable than the delight of the purse-proud and affected parvenus who could see in the new and glorious building only another field where they could spread themselves, as a strutting peacock does the prismatic colors of his tail feathers, and lord it over their betters.

It was the opening night of the St. Movadu opera-house, and the gorgeous auditorium was a blaze of light from a thousand incandescent lamps, with which the procenium, the dome, the pillars, the boxes, the balconies, the foyer, the reception rooms, the door-way arches, and all seemingly available places of the interior and entrances, were trimmed.

Occasional showers came down about the time the audience was gathering, and in front were heard the comparatively suppressed noises of vehicles and the calls of their drivers, taking their turn at the port-cochere, where were alighting the superbly dressed people of the wealthier class that came in carriages, with now and then some over-brave and gallant clerk, who was expending a

week's salary in escorting in this manner, to the opera, the stylish young lady whom he affected and who was willing to have him strain his finances while buzzing about her, until she got ready to marry some other man, whose establishment was far more permanent.

A dense umbrella-covered crowd was at the main entrance, slowly obtaining ingress, and the foyer was full of men in evening dress, with much display of shirt front, collars and cuffs, waiting for their ladies, who were depositing wraps in the reception room, obtaining a glance at a mirror, petting a rebellious bang, or training a straying lock, smoothing a ruffled bit of lace—the momentary adjustment of feminine pieces of adornment.

The theatre was filling, the cigarette young men were inanely chatting and posing in the smoking room, and the proscenium boxes were receiving their parties of different kinds.

The three boxes on the left—two below and one above—were occupied by the creme-de-la-creme of parvenu society—the ultra leaders of "The Four Hundred" so to speak.

There had been much flutter, for several days before, in securing the use of these boxes for the Pughs, the

Phelpses and the Keens, in order that the exclusiveness of their very exclusive set should not be encroached upon by such a "mixed gathering" as would attend the opera on this special occasion.

Jack Lacy—because he was the author of the dedication poem, that was printed in the program book, an exquisite souvenir brochure for the opening night, and because he was the intimate friend of the manager—had been offered a box; but had preferred seats elsewhere, for himself and Ada Benson, in order that he might see the performance on the stage without the conspicuity of a box.

The other boxes were occupied by parties of men about town, the clerks and their stylish young ladies before mentioned, and others.

The theatre was filled in every seat, and, from the stage, the dress circle and balcony seemed a great human bouquet, when the first swell of harmony from the orchestra rolled out into the auditorium, the notes seeking echo among the nooks and corners that had been strange to other music than the tap of hammers and the usual sounds of house-building.

There was much rustling of the pretty programs as

they were eagerly perused by hundreds, and that were afterward carelessly preserved, by most of the people, as souvenirs of the occasion, and to the future reading of Jack Lacy's dedication poem, which was as follows:

Not many short and fleeting years,
With all their hopes, and joys, and fears,
Have marched unhalting to the dead,
With steady, stern and silent tread,
Since o'er the hills and valleys here
The red man chased the panting deer.
And by the blue Pacific's tide
The warrior wooed his dusky bride;
Not long ago, where now we stand,
With blessings rich, on every hand,
The war-whoop through the forest rang,
Among the pines the wild winds sang;
The screams of eagles in the air
Met echo in the gray wolf's lair;
The bison, with his shaggy mane,
Grazed, all unharmed, upon the plain;
The paddle of the light canoe
Flashed where the water-lilies grew;
In nature's garb the land was drest,
From mountain's foot to craggy crest,
And all was fresh, untouched and wild,

The free home of the forest child.
But soon, from toward the rising sun,
Was heard the white man's axe and gun;
The forest bowed before his hand,
And as a garden bloomed the land;
Fair cities decked the boundless west,
And here, the fairest and the best
Sprang up, as if the builder's arm
Was aided by a magic charm.

The rarest of the glist'ning gems
That deck the city's brow—
The brightest in her diadem,
Is this we're setting now;
And 'neath the sun, no fairer shine,
Since Delphi, lost so long,
Was ever lifted to the Nine
Of Art, and Soul, and Song.

'Neath this broad dome, night after night,
For many a coming year—
'Neath all the golden, dazzling light,
From yon bright chandelier,
Shall come the man, the maid, the dame,
To drink from pleasure's cup,
And see the actor strive for fame,
And hold the mirror up.

The waking thoughts of Avon's bard,
His hero, king and clown,
His guileless maid, and bearded pard,
And monk, in cowl, and gown,
Shall often picture on this stage,
The passions, loves and hates,
Of every nation, land and age
Outside the pearly gates.

The soldier, lady-love and king,
Who came at Bulwer's call,
Shall make their gallant speeches ring
And echo through this hall,
And birds of song their notes shall trill
'Mid orange groves and palms,
And every heart shall feel the thrill
Of music's potent charms.

Here England's pursy Knight shall wince
Before the Windsor fays,
And Denmark's melancholy prince
Shall call his mimic plays,
And handle Yorick's fleshless pate,
And break Ophelia's heart,
And taming handsome, shrewish Kate,
Petruchio'll play his part.

Here Lear, "every inch a king,"
Shall wear his monstrous woes,
And Juliet to her lover cling
Till death's releasing throes;
Macbeth shall rue his murd'rous deeds
In crime's entangling mesh,
And Shylock, with revengeful greed,
Demand his pound of flesh.

And hunch-back Richard, cruel, vile,
Shall meet his Richmond here,
And on great Caesar's fun'ral pile
Shall fall the Roman tear.
The jealous Moor shall send above
Sweet Desdemona's soul,
And Pauline prove that woman's love
Outweighs the power of gold.

Bright tears of joy shall dim the eye
For Darling Jessie Brown,
Who hears, while others 'round her die,
The welcome slogan's sound.
Here poor old Rip shall totter in
To seek his little cot,
And find how, in Life's rush and din,
We are so soon forgot.

The earth, the sky, the boundless sea,
And every race and age,
Before these scenes shall gathered be
Upon this spacious stage.
Here Pleasure with her smiles shall bring
Surcease from daily cares,
And dullen Sorrow's sharpened sting,
And lift the woe she bears.

Little Miss Fan Pugh leaned over the velvet upholstered arm that separated the box of the Pughs from that of the Phelpses and remarked to Miss Madge Phelps, with what she intended for an aristocratic curl of the lip, but which resulted in producing an expression of olfactory offense:

"I think it a great pity that nothing can be done in this city without some of that horrid Lacy's would-be poetry."

"I think so too," replied Miss Madge, in simpering sympathy.

It was always evident, when Miss Madge said anything, that she was simply following the opinion of some one else, no matter how weak the opinion, or the person.

"It's awful rot," interjected the callow young man who

sat so close to Miss Madge that it seemed he was afraid she would get away.

The young man was in immaculate evening dress, and yet one felt in looking at him, that there was but little of him besides his collar. That was to all appearance a long linen cuff, and it seemed now and then as if it would slip over his head.

These three indulged in some other remarks of similar character concerning the poem, which none of them had read, nor would have appreciated, if they had, and they were exceedingly annoyed, they said, because such a beautiful program had been spoiled with such trash.

"Fan is so observing," Mrs. Pugh whispered to Mrs. Phelps, "and such a critic."

To which Mrs. Phelps responded, that Madge was too, thus betraying the source from whence Miss Madge had derived her striking originality.

The stage bell tinkled, and the curtain rose upon the opera, Wagner's "Lohengrin" presented by an excellent traveling troupe.

Those of the audience who appreciated the opera enjoyed it in the quiet way that such people usually do, while those who were really bored but who were of the

class that attend operas because it is fashionable, were the most demonstrative in their applause, and thus the boxes on the left gave ample evidence of the witlessness of their contents.

Mrs. Pugh had much to say of the "robustness" of Wagnerian music, and used other terms concerning the opera that she had memorized for the occasion, and Mrs. Phelps "thought so too."

The opera and the opening were over, and the people, as they slowly emerged from the theatre, seemed to be anxious to crowd close to each other—for a greeting word; to let each other know they had been there; to indulge that indescribable desire for close proximity among people at their best in dress and feelings; human gregariousness; to get a breath of fresh air; to get homeward again.

The noises of the cab-drivers and their cabs was greater than at the coming. The streets in the immediate vicinity of the opera house were suddenly filled from the outpour, like the amusement quarter of a great metropolis at such an hour.

The cabs and hacks rattled away, suggesting risks that many on foot would be run down by the Comanches of

the city, the drivers; the street cars that had blocked as near to the entrances as the lines ran, waiting to catch the crowd, buzzed off in their different directions, like great lightening bugs, leaving as their distance increased, a sound like the mournful hum of the big old Southern spinning wheel; the lights in the theatre went out; dark and quiet fell upon the scene that a few moments before had been one of light and life.

Nearly all the people who had attended the opera were at home within the hour; but a few young men, still in evening dress, had assembled at Kingsbury's to talk over the event of the night; to criticise or commend the performance, to gossip about who were there; to drink intoxicants and smoke cigars; to soothe the suppressed excitement of it all.

Major Stamina and Jack Lacy desiring a cigar and a little quiet talk together, had just arrived at the vestibule of the main entrance to the saloon and had let down their streaming umbrellas. Stamina was inside, and Lacy was crossing the threshold just as Charlie Polk, the callow young man who had escorted Miss Madge Phelps, was remarking, with intended innuendo, as if in reply to something that had been said immediately before:

"Yes, they seem to be much in love; one kind of love; but Lacy is no spring chicken."

At that instant the distance between Polk and Lacy, which was about twelve feet, was covered by a bound, and before one blow of Lacy's clinched hand the tall and callow young man fell sprawling, bleeding, stunned; his slandering tongue silent, until he should be resuscitated.

Lacy, with the look of the angered tiger that was his when thus aroused, stood glaring at the others, and Major Stamina exclaimed:

"Bully for you, Jack! That will do for him! Le's go in and smoke; you have licked your home-made dude."

And they went in and smoked.

CHAPTER XIII.

A Freeze-Out.

I'd been undone
By reptiles that, like other cowards, dare
Smite but the helpless; and the vision taught
A lesson—that perchance is old—to me:
Build all you may, 'twill crumble into dust,
But love and thought and song will ever be,
Though temples fall and riches come to naught.

—*Renaissance.*

Cole, the business manager of the "Times," knew his business in the sense that he lost no opportunity of turning everything that would yield revenue into his own pocket. He saw to it that "they came his way," whenever he had a chance to guide "things" in that direction. And in his present position he had.

An insinuating manner combined with a certain amount of what may be called unctuousness, for want of a better term, predominated largely in Cole's make-up. He was crafty, possessed of a fox-like cunning and an apparent sincerity on the surface, which would

lead those brought into contact with him for the first time, to set him down as a "hustler," a man who would "get there" in spite of all difficulties; qualities that were considered virtues in the flush days of St. Movadu.

Originally Cole had been a printer; then a farmer; he had dabbled in politics in Missouri and secured a post-office as a result. He had been a miner, and then a patent medicine vender, and had bought and sold real estate in several railroad towns of the middle west.

In each of his varied occupations, however, he had always overreached himself and shaken the confidence of his erstwhile friends.

But his confidence in himself was of the supernal kind. It never wavered, for while it might suffer, temporarily, it still knew how to be strong. It was Cole's stock-in-trade, and he used it for all it was worth. He had struck a rich pasture and he knew it, and he resolved to crop the sweet herbage on every side. His manner became more unctuous than ever before, and his thin lips took on a more sanctimonious smile than was their wont, while his sharp, beady eyes noted every condition in the rising town, and each was turned to his advantage.

He affected many virtues; he attended the most fash-

ionable church of the town; he drank little in public, but would sometimes consent to take a drink only in the most exclusive saloon in the town, but even this was done in a deprecating sort of way, intended to lead the stranger into the belief that here was a model man, as men go, who simply, as an act of good fellowship, would for a moment lay aside his temperance convictions, and talk of the future of St. Movadu over a social glass with the capitalist or the stranger who visited the town, either from curiosity or with an eye to investments.

So the world went well with Cole. His position on the "Times" gave him an opportunity to gain the confidence of the business men; his apparent piety gave him a standing with the church element of the young city; his affability in the saloon when he entered it caused him to be solid, or not a bad fellow, after all, but perhaps a little straight-laced for such a hustling, bustling town as was St. Movadu, where everything was "run wide open." And so for a time Cole's star was in the ascendant, and he gathered about him lots and lands, which he never attempted to improve, but held for speculation.

As his worldly prospects brightened and his wealth increased, Cole's humility took on an even deeper shade.

It was more flexible; he unlimbered himself. He was the same Uriah Heep, to be sure, but he began to stretch out. Feeling himself somewhat secure, he longed for more power, and a broader field in which to browse. The succulent grasses of St. Movadu were now grown to him a necessity.

Cole, who had come to St. Movadu with Van Waters, therefore began to lay his own plans. They were entirely in keeping with the man. Van Waters, it was, who had first given him the chance to lift himself from poverty to plenty. With his usual forgetfulness of self when others were concerned, Van Waters had pushed Cole to the front. And Cole was determined to stay there, so, with all the craftiness of his nature he sought to build himself up by the sacrifice of everybody and everything that lay between himself and the control of the "Times."

At the first his protestations of friendship for Van Waters were innumerable. In the streets and at the club, he heralded his praises, but now that the horizon of his hopes had become enlarged, flushed with the conscious pride of a parvenu whose newly found wealth had given him an importance in his own eyes, at least, Cole thought that the honor and credit and glory were being

bestowed upon the wrong man. He therefore began to extol himself; he blew his own horn lustily, yet with a certain degree of caution. He did not want the windy blasts to disturb too much those who Cole well knew appreciated him at his true merit, and there were many that did.

On the outside, Cole never used profane language; if he swore at all it was confined to the business office of the "Times," and the nearest he ever approached to anything like a profane expression was "gosh durn it" or "dog gone it, anyhow."

But now even these careless expressions were carefully eliminated from his vocabulary of expletives. He began to pay marked attention to Grayhunt, a man of negative virtues himself, whom the assumption of piety by the business manager of the "Times" impressed profoundly. Mr. Grayhunt was one of the stepping-stones Cole intended to use in his march to still further greatness.

"There are 'scads' of money to be made yet in St. Movadu," he said confidentially to a business acquaintance, "and I'm going to get my share. I might as well

have some of old Grayhunt's wealth while it is being distributed, and I'm after it."

He was indeed. His conferences with that gentleman grew more numerous. Cole's unctuousness increased day by day, observed by all who met him, and even marked by Van Waters, who was not fashioned in a mould to think evil of others.

The patches and pusillanimity of Cole's character were known to the live citizens of St. Movadu. But to Grayhunt alone he was the painstaking, conscientious model business man, whose habits were as methodical as those of Grayhunt himself. And Grayhunt was a model citizen, a lay figure, conspicuous for several small virtues.

The business management of the "Times," to Cole was a sinecure, in fact, though to all appearances he was devoted to his duties.

His plans were now about completed. He had wormed himself into the confidence of Grayhunt; he had, he believed, established his reputation firmly, and there only remained the coup d'etat, which was to send his success as high as possible for it to go in St. Movadu.

One more strike and Cole would be in a position to

laugh at all his enemies, and he was not so devoid of common sense that he did not know he had many.

With the "Times" in his sole control, he would be enabled to lay aside a part of the unctuous mien he carried about with him daily; for it began to be a burden even to Cole. It had long been painful to the citizens of St. Movadu.

While Cole was thus working to the front, living in rooms that belonged to the "Times" free of rent, using the fuel, water and lights of the "Times" establishment without expense to himself, surreptitiously accumulating property and paying other of his necessary bills by the use of the "Times'" advertising columns; having exclusive control of the books of the establishment, he managed to bring this wonderfully money-making newspaper enterprise out in debt to himself about the time that St. Movadu took its first downward start.

Van Waters, on the contrary, who had paid no attention to the books of the concern—in fact was incapable of business details—had implicitly trusted Cole, and instead of securing property advantages from the "Times," had gone on trying to make it the successful newspaper that it really had been. He bought and paid for out of his

limited means and by his salary saving the home that he built, but even that was heavily mortgaged.

This was the situation when, through the manipulations of Cole, backed by Grayhunt, Phelps and the entire outfit, Van Waters found, one day in the summer of St. Movadu's second year, that they had, together, worked a scheme to "freeze him out" of his interest in the "Times," and even his salary as its editor. So, 'twas with a heavy heart, he started for his home on the hillside in the early dawn of the next morning after his last night's work as editor of the "Times," the greatest factor, next to Newton Morse's money, in the up-building of the remarkable city of St. Movadu."

"Ship Ahoy-oy-oy!!!"

That is what chanticleer seemed to say to the wearied and worried journalist and Bohemian, who had worked for months with brain and nerve, with a yearning desire to help in the building of a great city and a great newspaper. He had almost succeeded and had done much more than his share.

It was nearly daylight when he reached the eminence upon which his cottage stood, and which toward the latter part of the trudge was approached by tortuous windings of

plank walk across some small gulches and along the hillside.

Almost breathless and beaten; every nerve trembling in its taut tension as if they were the vibrations of violin strings, he had thrown himself upon his bed, alone in his chamber, and it was late summer time.

A window at his pillow was open and the breezes came in softly, rustling the light curtains and even playing among his long locks of dark hair.

With that sound which seemed a sea shout of "Ship Ahoy," he was half aroused from what would have been a gentle sleep. He had read in stories of the cheery cry "Ship Ahoy!" and though he had often been to sea had never heard it before.

With this awakening he listlessly turned his eyes toward the glorious bay lit by the stars, and over the city in the foreground below, lit by the electric lamps that he with his pen had helped to light.

A great steamer came ploughing over the placid harbor. Gracefully careering it turned with the majestic sweep of a wide semi-circle toward the largest dock.

With jingling of bells and eccentric puffs; backing and filling, and with the cluttering and dabbling of paddle-wheels, it was made fast at last, and then pigmy-looking

deck-hands ran out a gang-plank to the top of the wharf and pigmy-looking passengers, gripsack, package and umbrella-laden, went single file ashore, and pigmy-looking stevedores and longshoremen rolled little boxes and barrels of freight over another gang-plank, below, to the slips and up to the main floor of the wharf. Then the great steamer with more of the jingling of bells and the dabbling of paddles backed out from the dock and sailed gracefully from the harbor.

Wearily and yet with an interest, Van Waters, who had toiled for the city's good, amid the trickery and treachery about him, unknowing of it all, had watched the movements of the steamer and its people, wondering no more, why that startling cry of "Ship Ahoy!"

He turned upon his pillow and saw, as in a dream, a mighty city growing that he had wrought to start.

But in it all he had unselfishly overdone himself.

A grand but sombre angel came and with gentle finger touched his heart; it ceased to beat, and his work, yet unfinished was done.

Chanticleer rose tip-toe again, clapped his wings and cheerily screamed to the morning,

"Ship Ahoy-oy-oy!!"

CHAPTER XIV.

A Setting Sun.

I gazed, enraptured, on the scene—
Below the vale; beyond the town
Just peeping through its leafy screen—
And stood there till the sun went down,
And darkness gathered all around.

—*My Village Home.*

Tom Fuller was a Chicago newspaper friend of Van Waters who had been visiting him for a few weeks and was his guest. He was some sort of distant relative of Mrs. Van Waters and she and Grace were exceedingly fond of him, as he was of them.

Van Waters had given standing instructions in his house that he was not to be disturbed in his daytime sleeps. His calling had made him a "night hawk," and for years, having retired generally about the time day workers were thinking of getting up, he usually slept until noon. Tom Fuller, Mrs. Van Waters and Grace, on the morning Van Waters died, went out on a sailing excursion with some friends on the bay, not knowing

that they had left the lifeless body of Van Waters in the closed apartment above stairs.

They did not return until toward the middle of the afternoon, and when Lottie, the maid of all work, informed Mrs. Van Waters that the master of the house had not arisen at his usual time, the three, Tom, Nan and Grace, gave each other a startled look, and led by Tom hastily ran upstairs. Tom knocked vigorously at the door, crying, "Get out, old man, or you will lose your breakfast, about dinner time." Of course there was no reply, and the three faces blanched. Fuller took a stepladder that stood in the attic and climbed over the transom, saying, "He must be very ill; perhaps it is a swoon."

Lightly swinging himself from the transom to the floor inside, he was quickly at the bedside of the dead man, and instantly became aware of the truth.

Fuller and Van Waters had loved each other, even more than brothers ordinarily do, from their childhood, and the appalling truth that he had discovered smote him a terrible blow. He turned to the door, unlocked it, and Nan and Grace rushed quickly into the room, Tom's blanched face bringing from both exclamations of pain.

The awful truth dawned upon the two women, and the three fell sobbing upon the dead man's couch.

Fuller was first to comprehend that something else must be done, and calling Lottie, he directed her to ring for a messenger, while he proceeded to the telephone and informed Major Stamina of the situation. In a few minutes later the major and Jack Lacy arrived in a carriage, and shortly after Ada Benson and Mrs. Dawson came also.

Pending the final arrangements for the funeral, hundreds of sympathizing friends, as well as many others impelled by curiosity, visited the Van Waters home.

Possibly for some fancied fashionable reason of their own, among the visitors were Mrs. Phelps and Mrs. Pugh, with the latter's simpering and affected daughters.

This party, after taking a look at the dead man, were seated a few moments in the hall, and as if for the ear of Jack Lacy, as he passed, Mrs. Pugh, with affected pathos, remarked to Mrs. Phelps: "He was really quite a good man, and I have often thought what a pity it was that he did not belong to the Episcopal church."

Lacy, knowing that Van Waters and his people for generations past had been Episcopalians; that his friend

had been the chief factor in the inauguration and establishment there of St. Paul's parish, and that he and his family had lately been driven from attendance at the services of that church by the snobbish and parvenu conventionalities that had grown into the congregation, at the hands of these people, and their followers, very few of whom, especially these, had ever been inside of an Episcopal church, until that which had been erected into the temple of the pitiful "400" to St. Movadu, was so indignant when he heard the remark that it seemed impossible for him to hinder his lips and tongue from saying to Mrs. Pugh: "Did you join the Episcopal church at Monterey?"

Without waiting for a reply, Lacy, knowing that his shot had hit the mark, hurried on, and the Phelps and Pugh party shortly afterward drove away in their carriages.

The funeral of Van Waters brought out one of the ruling passions of a great many men—Van Waters was a member of several secret societies, Masons, Elks, Knights of Pythias, etc., and these organizations turned out in large numbers. He was universally liked among the people of St. Movadu and the cortege that followed his

remains to the cemetery was by far the largest and most imposing that the new city had ever seen. Indeed there had not been more than ten burials in their "City of the Dead," and the opportunity for parade was taken advantage of—almost gladly. And yet the sincere mourners were unusually numerous.

A few days after the funeral, Arthur Campbell, a young lawyer whom Van Waters had always consulted in the few legal affairs necessarily coming in his business, accompanied by Major Stamina, and one or two other of Van Water's intimates, met for the purpose of looking into and straightening out the dead man's estate. They found a very brief will, in which Van Waters had made Major Stamina his executor. The will simply gave to Nan, his wife, whatever of property, personal and real, he might die possessed, and to Grace, his daughter, a life insurance of $10,000.

It was further discovered that every piece of real estate Van Waters had owned was heavily mortgaged, and that Cole, Grayhunt, Phelps and Company, had become possessed of the "Times" newspaper and printing establishment, leaving Van Waters' estate absolutely bereft of any interest in that. The home was so heavily mortgaged

that it was utterly out of the question to think of retaining possession of that; and Grace being under age the fund left her through the life insurance policy could not be used in its defense. Besides, the stricken wife was anxious to go back with her daughter to the old home in New York state, where she could be among her relatives and those of the husband she mourned, and Tom Fuller took them away.

Cole, now entirely in charge of the "Times," patronizingly offered the editorship of the paper to Jack Lacy, who quietly and firmly refused the distinguished honor, saying, perhaps unnecessarily, but in his candid way, that the "Times" would never be edited again.

Cole had never liked Jack Lacy, but he was acute enough in business to know that Lacy was the best man he could obtain then, in St. Movadu, and it was his intention to place Lacy in the editorship, but only until he could bring a man of his own kind from somewhere else, when he would unblushingly discharge Mr. Lacy.

Jack not only believed that this was the plan of Cole, but he had a disinclination to take the position vacated by the death of his friend, and he had also other matters of importance, to himself, that would distract his

attention to such an extent that he would be unable to do himself justice in that work.

Some weeks after the incidents just related a queer affair occurred.

For years Lacy had carried in his purse a curious button, exquisitely wrought by some East Indian artist. He was desirous of presenting this to Ada Benson on the recurrence of her birthday, which was then a few weeks away; but it was necessary that for the purpose of a brooch, into which shape he proposed to have it altered for his sweetheart, a pin and bar be placed upon it, with some tender words engraved thereon suited to his fancy.

To DeWolf, the leading jeweler of the city, he took the button. The jeweler, who was well informed in his art, and who was also a scoundrel, a fact known to but few people, comparatively, at once saw that the trinket was of great value, indeed far more valuable than Lacy had ever thought, for he had treasured it more for its beauty than its intrinsic value.

DeWolf was much infatuated with a gypsy-like and fascinating courtesan, whom he was solicitous should wear the jewel. Deftly he sounded Mr. Lacy and offered to purchase it of him, at a most astonishing price.

Lacy, however, refused the jeweler's importunities, and finally told DeWolf that the button was not for sale at any price and that he couldn't raise money enough to buy it. So the exquisite thing was left in the hands of the jeweler with instructions how to mount and engrave it.

So determined was DeWolf to possess the jewel that he deliberately set at work and produced a counterfeit of it, mounted as directed, and when Lacy came for it, delivered to him the counterfeit and retained the original. It was early in the evening when Jack received the little case containing the brooch, and being somewhat hurried, without examining the contents of the box, he placed it in his pocket, paid the jeweler's bill and hastened away.

The business that called him was with Major Stamina, and having reached that gentleman's office, the gift for his sweetheart being uppermost in his mind, he immediately produced it, for the purpose of exhibiting it to the enthusiastic major, who declared it to be the most beautiful thing he had ever seen.

By the absence of some little mark that Lacy had frequently observed upon the original button he discovered the counterfeit, and disclosed that fact to Major Stamina, who had often seen the button before in Lacy's

hands, and quickly the two repaired to DeWolf's establishment, but to find that the wily jeweler had closed his establishment for the night.

A warrant was at once secured for DeWolf's arrest, and accompanied by a policeman, Lacy and Major Stamina repaired to the house of the fascinating courtesan, where they found the culprit and he was placed under arrest. He offered to return the original jewel in consideration of his release; but Lacy, wildly indignant over the fraud that was about to be perpetrated against him, and especially his sweetheart, refused DeWolf's overtures, and the rascally jeweler was placed in jail. A search warrant was obtained, however, and DeWolf, in jail, was informed of this writ, and advised by Major Stamina, that rather than have his establishment ransacked the best thing he could do would be to reveal the hiding-place of the jewel, which idea the jeweller craftily saw would be to his advantage, and produced the button from his purse.

Lacy asked him if the courtesan had even seen or handled the button, and being assured by DeWolf, the circumstances corroborating his declarations, that he had not had time to exhibit it to his charmer, and that he had in fact intended to mount it and present it to her as a sur-

prise, Mr. Lacy felt much relieved; for had he learned that the jewel had ever been contaminated by the touch of the harlot, he would have been unable to present it to the pearl of a woman whom he almost adored.

The button having been thus secured, Lacy left the rascally jeweler in the hands of the law. On the following day the fellow obtained a bond and was released from custody. Having thus obtained temporary freedom the jeweler made great haste to dispose of his establishment, and left St. Movadu, for the time intervening between that and the day set for his trial. That came about a month afterwards and the jeweler, thinking the matter had blown over, made his appearance in court for trial.

In the meantime, Lacy and Stamina, having fully considered the matter and Jack being deeply anxious lest in the trial the name of his sweetheart might be brought into court, decided not to appear. The district attorney, who was Lacy's intimate friend, possibly appreciating Jack's feeling in the matter, entered a nolle prose qui; DeWolf was released and soon after left the city for good—and also for the city's good.

DeWolf's rascality turned out to be a most fortunate thing for him, financially, after all. At the time of his

departure he was able to dispose of his jewelry establishment at a very good price—a thing which he could not have done three months afterwards.

The failure of the Baring Brothers had by this time begun to affect the financial world. Hard times began to creep over the country; some changes by a great railroad king, in affairs that affected St. Movadu, gave the young city a stunning blow. People began to close out their business and depart by tens, then by hundreds, then by thousands, from the unfortunate city.

The "Times" newspaper became a four-page sheet instead of an eight-page publication; its columns were filled largely with ready-print matter; the general printing business fell off in an appalling way, and now, instead of a staff of editors and reporters, several employees of the business office and twenty-five or thirty men and boys in the composing and press rooms, the entire force dwindled down to five people, a cheap editor, an amateur reporter, Cole in the business office, and two printers who set the type and then printed the emaciated issue upon the press, thus doing double duty, and even in that consuming but little of their time.

St. Movadu became a city of shreds and patches. En-

tire squares were vacated, and eventually, for months, and even for years, the streets were deserted, and the situation became painfully pathetic.

The "Times" was at last consolidated with another little daily that had been established in the latter days of St. Movadu's prosperity, and the two were turned into one weakly weekly.

The change had reduced Cole to poverty, and with a few dollars in cash that he had kept hidden somewhere, he left on a steamer one morning, ostensibly for a visit to a neighboring city, but the places about St. Movadu that knew him knew him no more thereafter.

St. Movadu's first sun had set.

CHAPTER XV.

An Aristocratic Democrat.

Now list the music of his shell,
And hear his raptured accents tell
Of pure and noble things.
With minstrel's art and poet's heart
He fills the bowl that soothes the soul,
And plays upon its strings.
—*The Poet King.*

Major Stamina and Arthur Campbell sat upon the marble steps of the First National Bank of St. Movadu on a glorious morning in late autumn of the young city's second year. They saw Jack Lacy, with Ada Benson seated beside him, drive by in a handsome phaeton drawn by an honest-looking bay horse.

Both men arose, lifted their hats and saluted the couple with pleasant words and cordial smiles.

Of course that was not enough for Major Stamina, for with the return, from the phaeton, of their salute, the major yelled out in his exhuberant and hearty way:

"Now you look something like, young man. Keep up your lick! Go it strong! That's the way to win! He's

all right, Miss Ada! Stick to him and you'll be wearing diamonds all over your bonnet, first you know. Going to see the old man? Good luck! Give him my regards. Good-bye. See you later," and he sat down again beside Lawyer Campbell, who had already resumed his seat on the marble, remarking as he did so:

"That young fellow is coming out strong. I always knew he would. St. Movadu seems to be going to the dickens just now, between you and me, but she'll come out again. Mark my words, she'll come out all right, star-spangled and with the scream of the eagle. Got to do it. It's here. Everything's here to do it. But there's going to be a squall, I'm telling you; mighty bad squall, too. It's in the air. This young man, though—this Jack Lacy—he's right in it. They tell me that mine of his, up in the Oro district, is just simply a whizzer. Besides, the old man Duncan has been giving him a lift to develop her. The old man warn't near as bad broke as folks thought he was. But he's mighty close to Jordan's stormy waters—"

"Have you known Lacy long?" Campbell broke in.

One had to break in to get in a word edgewise when the major got started on a prolific theme, and nearly all

themes were prolific to him, or at least such as he chose to talk on.

"Know him, I should say I have known him. I knew him before he was born—that is to say, I knew his father and mother before they were married—used to take a sort of a shine to the old lady—young lady then—long before Tom Lacy, Jack's dad, ever thought of her, and—"

"What sort of people were they?" Campbell interjected again.

"People? Finest on earth. Tom Lacy came from old Scotch-English stock—had a De on the name—De Laceys, you know. Walter Scott's got something about some De Laceys in one of his novels, you know—same stock, I reckon; good stock, anyhow, but Tom was born and raised in Virginny; didn't like any foolishness, you know, so he just took a corn knife or something and whacked the De right off, and they've been going it plain Lacys ever since."

"Jack has much of the courtly gentleman about him, but he doesn't look it," said Campbell. "He seems to me a strange mixture of aristocrat and democrat. How do you account for that?"

"Easy as falling off a log," confidently asserted the major. "If ever a man's face belied him it's that same Jack Lacy's face. His mother was about the finest looking young woman I ever saw; her hair and eyes as black as night; face like a princess, with a nose on it that had a little bit of a Roman hump to it, and she was blooded, too, you hear me; old French Huguenot stock that settled in the Carolineys and Virginny. And Tom was a mighty sight like her—handsome as a Messenger horse; but he had red hair—auburn, some call it, and was built like a prize fighter. Jack must have bred back, or forwards, or something. He don't look like what he is—them long, white eyelashes and that sort of a muckle-berry-dun head of his, and that scattering moustache—but did you ever notice his eyes? Look into those blue eyes of his if you want to see all there is in that man. Game as a wildcat; kind as a woman; sharper than a steel trap; heart too big to fit him; bright, smart, and still as innocent as a lamb. Don't know a lick on earth about conniving. I remember one time out in Missoury. We both lived in St. Joe eighteen years ago. Jack was only a kid then, but he was a mighty handy reporter on a newspaper, and blamed if he wasn't all mixed up in the big whisky ring

of that time and didn't know of its existence till they had his employers and about five or six more of the big business men, that he associated with every day, in jail. They had been sending telegrams by Jack and making him handy, and him as innocent as a lamb. They were men that stood so high socially, commercially and financially that he never would have suspected them of anything but being straight as a ruler. And the fact is some of them that were arrested were as honest men as ever saw the sun. Then, again, some of them weren't. But all of them seemed to think that they had a right to beat the government out of whisky tax. They were distillers, wholesale dealers in the truck, and government officials —inspectors, gaugers, warehousemen and the like. And they just doted on little Jack."

"But if they doted on him so, why didn't they give him a slice of the big money they were making?"

"Well, tell you how it was. Jack was talking to the king of the ring one day, in Chicago, years after the thing was over. This boss had been a particular admirer of little Jack's and Jack asked him the very question you've asked me. Joking, rather, he said, 'Why didn't you let me in on that scheme?' The ex-king, who had

served about half his three years' time and was pardoned by President Hayes, said, 'Well, to tell you the truth, Jack, we thought you were too honest to trust.' Just think of that, Cam. Too honest to trust? Now, wouldn't that kill you? Then the king went on to say, 'Do you remember, Jack, the time I asked you if you wouldn't like to be a government warehouse-keeper at eight dollars a day, and you said, no, you didn't want to be fooling around a whisky warehouse? Well, my son, if you had taken the place I was going to give you, the chances are that you would have been mixed up somewhat in the ring and you would have had stripes running like a zebra on you before you got out of it. But none of us thought then that we were going to get into any trouble.' It was lucky for Jack that he was too honest to be trusted, wasn't it?"

"Well, rather," replied Mr. Campbell. "But you haven't explained to me how Lacy comes to be aristocratic and democratic both."

"That's easy. Ask me something hard," returned the major. "You see, Jack's blooded. I told you that before. He came from away up stock on both sides. French nobility, British knighthood, through the old Virginny

blood of the best kind, and he just simply inherited aristocracy. Besides, he's as brave as Julius Caesar and as gallant as Dick the Lion-hearted; but he's all American. He's got a sense of justice that would have helped even old Judge Marshall, and he's a believer in the nobility of skilled labor. I have heard him say when he was a boy and read English history the first time, there were two of the old-time kings that particularly struck his fancy. One of them was Alfred, who could shoe his own horse, and often did it, and the other was Edward III., who, when he picked up a woman's garter at a court ball and a courtier sneered, turned to him with some sort of a parley voo talk, that I don't remember—and wouldn't if I could—but which meant, 'That woman's under my protection and I'll see you later. I'm king!' Jack can go into a blacksmith shop and make as good a horseshoe as Jim Purvis can, to save him, and did you ever see him hit the 'pianner forty' and the banjo? Look at his poetry, and look how he loves that girl of his'n. And don't you remember, the other day, when he wanted to find out if that woman of DeWolf's had ever had her hands on that button for the brooch. If she had, Jack would have ground that costly thing under his heel before

he would have given it to Ada Benson, but he would have bought her something twice as expensive to make up for it. That's just a little pointer on Jack Lacy's gallantry. He's all silk, my son, and as wide as the earth."

"Well, I'm glad to hear all this about Lacy. I always liked him, and I think I like him more than ever now."

"You can't like him too much, I'll tell you that, old man, for he's as good to tie to as the Goddess of Liberty, or the north star, and I'm mighty glad that he has struck it rich, especially when all the balance of us here are going, temporarily—mind, I say temporarily—to the bow-wows. By the way, Cam, come walk up home with me, I want to show you some roses. You never saw any roses. Hush, now don't try to say anything. I tell you you never saw any roses—"

"But, I—"

"Yes, I know you think you have, but come right along with me, I want to prove to you that you never did know any more about roses than a cat does about Sanscrit. And—" The major brought that "and" out with a rising inflection and a long stretch of it for emphasis, "A-n-d maybe I'll show you some other things."

Campbell was glad to go. St. Movadu was moribund. Litigation had almost ceased, as had all other kinds of business. He had more leisure than anything else, except almost worthless town lots, for he too had been caught in the downfall of the city, so he arose, assisted in a playful way by a pull from the major's strong hand, and as they stood upon the steps both looked up and down the almost deserted streets and heaved big sighs in concert.

Indeed the scene was pathetic.

There were whole squares in the business part of the city, that a few months before was instinct with commercial and social life, now almost entirely deserted. Hundreds of handsome homes along the hillsides were tenantless, and there was an air of desertion and loneliness that one sometimes observes about a crossroad hamlet on a holiday, when all the people of the place have gone, early, to a neighboring town to celebrate. But the mercurial Major Stamina, always as full of hope as the firmament is of stars on a clear night, came out strong with the remark:

"You could shoot a Gatling gun down that street and never hit anything but a dog, unless it's Phelps—still I

don't take back the dog. But it will be all right after awhile, Cam. This thing ain't a going to last. The resources are too big. We've got the site, old man, and she'll whoop up yet, I'm telling you."

The two walked on toward the major's home, six or eight blocks away, and up the picturesque grades, talking of St. Movadu's past and of its future prospects, possibilities and probabilities, until they reached the house to which they had started.

The cottage was not a large one, and it was quite plain as to architecture, its principal ornaments in that line being a bay window at the front and another on the east side, with a porch beside each window; but over windows and porches there was a wealth of running rose-bushes, honey-suckles and other vines that almost hid them, and late autumn as it was, these vines were all bending with a wealth of bloom.

Proudly the major handed his guest up the short flight of steps that led to the front gate, and without a thought of entering the building, led the attorney through the grounds from one clump of brilliant foliage to another, all the time chattering away in his enthusiastic and sometimes extravagant manner.

"Look at that Marechal Niel," he said. "Did you ever see anything like it? Didn't I tell you, you never saw any roses? Look here—talk about the yellow rose of Texas—how's that for a yellow rose? Come, give it up now. Did you ever see any roses before?"

"Don't think I ever did, major," meekly and admiringly the lawyer admitted.

"That's right, Cam, always tell the truth. It might bother you a little professionally at times, but we won't count that. How's that for La Frances," and the major lovingly put his arms half way around a golden, glowing and lusty specimen of that kind of a rose tree.

"Takes me to raise roses, Cam," he continued. "'Bout four feet down there I piled in broken stone, for about two feet; keeps it damp down there, you know, and gives the roots something to cling to. Then I filled up with rich dirt, and there you are—roses—see 'em? But ain't they roses? Look at that vine. I brought a slip of that from my old home, out here. My mother taught me how to raise roses. I wouldn't take a house and lot—no joke meant—I wouldn't take a mint for that rose vine. I'll bet that for the last four months I could have cut a thousand roses a day on these four lots. Now take a little

peep in here," and the major pulled back the foliage of some currant bushes of which there was a long row beside the walk around the house. The amber and crimson fruit hung in great bunches on the bushes.

"No currants in there," he went on; "not a single currant. Can't see any currants, can you?" pulling back bush after bush and exposing the berries in all their beautiful plenty. "They've gathered currants from those bushes to make jam and jelly enough to feed an army—small sized army—and now there are none left. Can't see a darned currant, can you Cam?"

Then the jolly major turned to the strawberry patch The leaves of the plants had for the most part turned yellow and crimson; some green leaves were left and here and there a great belated berry peeped out.

"There's a piece of ground fifty feet square. There are about five hundred plants on the space. I'll bet you a horse against a box of pills that we took ten bushels of strawberries off of that piece of ground this season. And say, my son, some of them were as big as a tin cup—pint cup, mind you. Lots of them were eight and nine inches in circumference and weighed near half a pound apiece."

"I know that," Campbell agreed; "I saw a few of them down at Kingsbury's."

"Yes, I sent a few of them down there," the major explained, "as the best place for folks to see them. Never sold any of them. Never sold a cent's worth of anything that the good Lord gave me from the bosom of Mother Earth in my life. Raise enough stuff for my family, balance goes to whoever will come after it, if they are respectable people. Tramps not admitted."

"Here, Bulger!"

A big dog came bounding toward the major. "Tramps not admitted, are they, Bulger? Look over yonder, Cam. Don't see any cabbages, do you. Krout enough for St. Movadu. More than enough if people don't quit going away. Oh, no! no cabbages, and turnips and rutabagas, and beets and carrots and things, oh, no! And say, Cam, now admit again. Did you ever really see any roses before?"

"Cam" admitted again, and the major said, "Come in, let's get a drink of water." He led Mr. Campbell through the back hall and into what the major called his "den," a room that was a curiosity in itself, besides being crowded with innumerable other curiosities. There were elk

heads, carraboo heads, moose heads, taxidermized. Sea shells, a chair made of the long polished horns of Texas cattle, a big wagon load of healthy looking and solid old books, ranged on open shelves. There was a rag carpet on the floor. "Mother made it," the major said, meaning his wife, and—

Oh, well, let's not stop to enumerate and catalogue the contents of the major's den, except to say that there were also, besides the major's desk, and some large and comfortable chairs, and a lounge, a hospitable looking side-board.

The two were seated, and the major in his stentorian voice called out "Mother!"

Almost in the same moment a pleasant-faced and smiling matron of about forty entered, in the home garb that she usually wore when about her household duties, except the gingham apron that she had laid aside when she found a visitor was in the house.

Mrs. Stamina bore in her right hand a pitcher filled with water and some ice that jingled refreshingly against the inside of the vessel. In the other hand were a couple of big goblets held at the stems by her ample fingers.

"You've met Judge Campbell?" said the major.

"Oh, yes," from both Mrs. Stamina and the lawyer—all lawyers were "judge" with the major on such occasions.

The two shook hands, Mrs. Stamina offering some words of welcome that were received with polite response by the lawyer.

"I heard you ask Mr. Campbell to come in and get a drink of water," said Mrs. Stamina, with a knowing smile, "so I brought it with me, you see," and she pointed to the pitcher of ice-water that she had deposited on the table.

"Water is an excellent drink," quoth the major in a serio-comic way, "but an eminent physician once gave me a prescription by which I could very much improve water. Mother, I'll bet a lot in Worrell's addition that there isn't a sprig of mint on earth, especially in this neighborhood," and again the major looked humorously serious.

"Come on, Teddy, come," said Mrs. Stamina to a sturdy "chunk of a boy" whom the major and wife had taken from a foundling house seven or eight years before and adopted as their own, not being blessed with

offspring their very own. And Ted came almost instantly afterward, bearing a big bunch of mint that he had gathered almost under the window of the major's den.

Meantime the major was looking through his desk for that "prescription to improve water." "But," he said, "you know it by heart, mother; please concoct it for us," notwithstanding that the good lady had already begun the delightful task. Anything she could do for Major Stamina and his guests was a pleasure for that excellent wife.

The major continued, however, to search for the "prescription," "because," he declared, "I want Judge Campbell to have a copy of it. Why, it may save his life some time. Ah! here it is," and the major unfolded a somewhat brown-with-age piece of manuscript and gave it to Mr. Campbell, who read from it as follows:

"Sacch. alb zii

Cum. aqua font. quant. suff.

Cognac fort. zip.

Spir. frumenti quant. suff.

Fol. menth. vir. vel pip. ad lib,

Fiat infusum et add.

Glacies pulv. quant. suff.

Omnia misce.

Repeat dose three or four times a day until cold weather sets in.

The "prescription to improve water" being filled, the major and Mr. Campbell accepted one each from Ted and Mrs. Stamina and proceeded to take the "dose" from the goblets in light sips, as per directions, and the conversation proceeded—increased in fact—for one of the names of that prescription is "conversation water."

Mrs. Stamina and Ted had left the room, bent upon some important errand to the yard, which was probably the collection of a big boquet for Mr. Campbell, and let us, dear reader, leave them there awhile with that "prescription."

Thus we would be coadjutors in Major Stamina's hospitality.

With a mint julep, isn't a bad place to leave a couple of friends.

CHAPTER XVI.

Reminiscences.

More fit for me a sweet refrain
  Of home and long ago—
Harp of the south, I strike again
  The dear old quaint banjo.

—Harp of the South.

I've heard it in the evening
  Within a quiet home,
Sing "Suwanee River" till the bees
  Came humming round the comb.

—The Governor's Violin.

In that region of country along the Pacific coast of the United States from the northern part of California on the south to the British possessions on the north, and west of the Cascade range of mountains, the variations of temperature from one year's end to another are comparatively even. For the most part the inhabitants wear nearly the same thickness of clothing all the time, adding in winter—the rainy season—a mackintosh or other waterproof wrap. But rarely do snow and ice come in the val-

leys to great depth or thickness, but rarely, and seldom in summer is there much heat. It is never intense. Sometimes an entire winter will pass without snow or ice, and often summers without greater heat than that of a balmy day in springtime in the middle and eastern states. But generally the winter months and the first two of spring weep almost incessantly with light rains, to which the people become inured and which they rather like.

It was about two months after the incidents related in the last chapter that the winter rains set in on St. Movadu and all the region described. The young city had become more and more pathetic in its deserted state. From a population of ten thousand or more it had dwindled to less than two thousand souls, and many of these remained because they could not get away. The few that could have gone had their entire capital, great or small, invested in city property that was utterly unsalable at any price. Some who had been purse-proud and arrogant were as humble as the patient cows that proud dames, theretofore, were now milking twice a day, and glad for themselves and their children that these docile beasts yielded much of their sustenance.

The gambler and his female companion, like the first

rats to desert a sinking ship, were all gone. Every drinking place but one, of the more respectable class, were closed. There were yet one or two of the viler groggeries in the lower portions of the abandoned city that continued to eke out a squalid existence by the occasional sale of a "jolt" of fire and liquid damnation to a pitiful hanger-on. Nearly all the retail stores and shops presented locked and barred front doors, the stocks having been moved to more prosperous places.

In short, St. Movadu was as dead as it seemed possible for such a place to ever become. Even the spirit of friendliness was dead that had existed between those of the people who belonged to either of the classes prominent during the city's prosperity; the brain and brawn that had been the working bees of the hive, and the "nouveaux riches" that had assumed parvenu airs.

There were exceptions to this among very small coteries or couples. The times had brought the test of friendship. When money was plentiful and all who were possessed of strength and ambition were prosperous, it was easy for men to be liberal, accommodating and apparently generous; but when the depression came, the true nature of every individual was unveiled. Thus men

who had appeared to be benevolent and public spirited were seen to be small, stingy and selfish. The true hearts were of course unchanged.

The sincere friendships that had been in the days of prosperity or that were forged together in the trials of adversity, grew even stronger and more conspicuous, and of these that between Major Stamina, Jack Lacy, Dr. Somerset and Arthur Campbell would have delighted the most perfect optimist and astonished the most intense pessimist.

Campbell and Stamina were almost inseparable. Lacy was not so much with them. He was the one prosperous man of the city. His mine was paying handsomely, even in the process of its development, but it was not so much the exactions of his business that kept him out of the desired company of his two friends as his remarkable devotion to old Dan Duncan who was now a confirmed invalid, confined all the time to his rooms and for the most part to his bed.

Lacy had grown fond of the old man, long before that passing pioneer had unbosomed to the Bohemian his secret—not only the secret of his wealth, but another in which Lacy was more interested.

Lacy's noble sweetheart, Ada Benson, continued also to give the old man every attention that maidenly modesty and her spare hours from school would permit, and there grew a tie between the invalid old man and the bright, handsome and healthy woman that was the more astonishing when the disparity of their ages and the great contrast of character, bearing and attainments were considered. And yet the old man betrayed a gallantry, now and then, that would have been a credit to a courtier.

"I don't want you to be hampered up in that thar school, that's my tum tum," he sometimes said in almost a whine or whisper, the tone induced by his illness and weakness, and in the remnant of East Tennessee dialect that had clung to him through all the years of his semi-hermitage at Duncan's Cove, using occasionally a word from the Siwash jargon familiar to him for twenty years. "Thar ain't no use fur it. Jack's got enough to keep his fewter wife out of the rain, goin' and comin', and then bein' cooped up thar with them young ones all day—"

"But I like it, Uncle Dan," she had long ago asked and obtained permission to call him 'Uncle Dan'. "They

are bright children generally, and they love me and I love them. It is a pleasure to teach them and—"

"You would not rob her of what little pleasure she can find in St. Movadu, would you?" interposed Mr. Lacy.

"N-o-o," the old man drawled. "But I think I know a heap better reason in her mind than the sorter one she gives," he continued. "Chances are she don't want to take yo' money till she's married, Jack. I know the critters. But she'll make it fly then," with a feeble laugh the old man ended.

"I have other pleasures, Jack," Miss Benson declared. "It is a great pleasure to be allowed to come here to see Uncle Dan, and it will be a greater one to see him get well and out again. But with all this rain, I am afraid it wouldn't be safe for him to go out for a long time after he is well."

"I wouldn't keer for the rain, honey, if I was well; that's skookum for me; but I don't much 'spect to get well till summer comes agin, if then."

While this visit was proceeding Major Stamina and Arthur Campbell, who were also frequent visitors at Dan Duncan's rooms, had decided, as a matter of reminiscence, to visit the apartments of the Ajax club once more.

They called at the office of Tom Hammond, a lonesome real estate dealer—without deals—in the same building, who had possession of the keys to the club rooms, being the last secretary of that innocuous organization.

Having obtained the means of entrance to the unused place, they climbed the stairs and admitted themselves to silent halls that had been the scene of many a gay and brilliant gathering.

They found a feather dusting-brush that was very dusty. Campbell took it gingerly by the feathers and knocked it against a wall until the dust had been jarred from the handle, which he also wiped with his handkerchief, much to the detriment of that piece of linen, and then he brushed the dust from two of the ample chairs and from a small table. Still armed with the brush, he proceeded to another room where stood the superb sideboard, and dusted about that until he could read the labels on some wine bottles, from which he selected one that contained a pint of old, pale sherry. Securing a pair of goblets, he washed them under the hydrant-tap in the room, and the major, having found some clean napkins in a drawer of the sideboard, dried the glasses with them, and the two went back to the great reception room, drew

the table toward a window that looked out on the main portion of the city, and with few words between them, sat at the table, tersely remarking "How," while they touched their glasses and drank.

As if by the same impulse, both started up and separately began a tour of the place, inspecting, as if they had never seen them before, the many excellent paintings and engravings that hung almost dust-veiled against the frescoed walls.

They wandered into the billiard room with its tables under their black covering of rubber cloth, that were now gray with a depth of dust upon which some other visitor had lately written, with a finger, his name and the date of his call; then into the card rooms and the office, through a drawing room and back again to the grand reception hall, where the major who had never been quiet so long before in his life, ejaculated: "Say, Cam, this is pretty nigh awful."

"Yes," responded the lawyer,—

> "I feel like one who treads, alone,
> Some banquet hall deserted."

"That's about the size of it," the major laconically re-

plied, and moved toward the bottle of sherry again, from which he took another hearty draught.

"I'll join you," said Campbell, and after following the major's example as to the sherry, the two resumed the seats they left and gazed out of the window over the sad-looking city and toward the broad bay that was bereft of sail, or any craft, save one little stern-wheel steamer that always kept close to shore and navigated a small river, the mouth of which was at an estuary on the St. Movadu side of the bay, two or three miles away.

One or two persons came to the front door of one of the groceries left—and looked up as if astonished to see people in the Ajax club rooms.

"Can't do justice to the subject," was the major's somewhat obscure remark. But Campbell understood it as applying to the present condition of St. Movadu, and he wisely offered the suggestion:

"Don't try to do it, major."

"Say, lemme tell you," the major continued, "this is a sort of dispensation of Providence against them dad-ratted fools that got too big for their clothes when things were humming in these parts. But I don't see why all the balance of us have to take their punishment. Still, I

can't help but say that it made me feel rather good to see that Phelps woman coming down the other day with a cake she had baked to have it sold at Pete McGowan's restaurant; people got to eat, you know, and it's my opinion that the Phelps woman can bake better than she can do anything of a social nature."

"The most painful thing to me, major, is to see those Pugh girls slaving away down at Small's little one-horse laundry. Their father is utterly poverty-stricken. Went his length and more too on the Bay View addition, and Grayhunt has foreclosed on him and cleaned him up."

"Well, I've suffered more acutely from other causes than that," remarked the major, "and I'll bet a house and lot—no joke meant—against a jug of buttermilk that they will be able to stand it. They've got hands as broad as charity, and that look like they would cover a wash-board to a nicety."

"They are not washing, however; they are only ironing," Mr. Campbell explained just as Jack Lacy entered, carrying a japanned cash-box by the top handle.

"I've been chasing you two half an hour," said Lacy, "and probably would never have found you if I hadn't happened to run against Tom Hammond, who told

me you had got the keys to the club. What on earth brought you up to this souvenir of busted parvenuism?"

"Just came up to take a retrospective view," the major answered.

"You wouldn't take a glass of sherry, would you, Lacy?" from Campbell, politeness mixed with deprecation.

"I should say not," the major promptly responded for Jack.

"Both of you are wasting your politeness and solicitude," Jack said in a tone of mock severity.

"There is no danger of my going into that sort of thing again. The Keeley cure is all right, and when added to the Lacy cure it's a specific."

"The Lacy-Benson cure," laughed the major.

"Well, put it that way if you choose," said Lacy, who had been manipulating the feather duster over the piano lid and the keys. Then seating himself at the instrument he struck a chord and sang:

"Down the winding river drifting
I am coming, love, to you;
Through the trees the moonlight's sifting,
'Cross my dug-out, gum canoe;

Coming, honey love, to you.
In the deep, dark woods a hiding
Pipes the whining whip-poor-will,
All the other birds a-chiding
With his 'plaining 'still, be still,'
Like my heart, old whip-poor-will.
Now my mocking bird sing true,
Though the old owl hoots 'to who?'
And the ring-dove says 'not you.'
So the mock-bird's softly trilling
From his trembling heart and mouth
That sweet song my soul is thrilling.
For my honey 'way down south,
For my honey 'way down south."

"My, but ain't that pooty!' the major exclaimed.

"It has the fragrant breath of the old south," the lawyer declared, and Jack closed the piano, remarking as he did so:

"I have got to like the little thing myself because Dan Duncan is so very fond of it. I often sing it for him with the banjo, and he says it takes him back to old Tennessee and his boyhood, when he used to float down the French Broad in his canoe on a visit to his sweetheart and paddle back by the moonlight. That old man is as full of senti-

ment as one of Tom Moore's poems. In his illness and weakness, he seems to think of little else than his youth and young manhood in his southern home of that time, and talks and dreams of them day and night. That and his love for Ada Benson and myself, are deeply touching to me, and the word-pictures he makes in mixed Siwash and southern dialects would be masterpieces of art and song if they could be painted and sung."

"How's the old man getting along?" Major Stamina asked.

"I think he is near the end," Lacy replied, "and he wants to see you and Campbell this evening if you can possibly get there. This box," tapping it with his finger, Lacy continued, "is his. It was in the National Bank vault, and he sent me to get it. I think it is concerning its contents that he desires to see you, Campbell, as an attorney and the major as witness. Probably his will. Can you come?"

"I'll be there, sure," the major replied, and bring Cam. with me. You'll go?"

"Of course."

"And Ada Benson," quoth the major.

"You are a great guesser, major," from Lacy. "Till then good-bye," and Lacy hurried away.

Campbell and Stamina resumed their seats at the little table and consulted the sherry bottle again, yet both were unusually temperate men. Their samples of the seductive old wine were small enough, and there was a sadness about the deserted club and the deserted city that they could see from the windows, with the soughing of the wind; the sobbing of the sea swells on the beach; the dripping of rain upon the window sills; the air of antiquity that the deep-settled dust upon the furniture gave to their immediate surroundings; the gravity of the times, to give a blue tinge to their thought and talk that would have taken more pale sherry than that one decanter held to disperse it all.

"Old Duncan's got money, and heaps of it, if you hear me," the major said, almost mysteriously, "and he will give it all to Jack and Ada, I'll bet a game hen, and somehow I'm depending on Jack to lift things here. Say, man, that fellow's sharper than a razor. Blame me if he ain't been buying a whole square right plump in the heart of this place, according to the town plat—that vacant square north of the Woodworth hotel; and he got it at a

price that a year ago wouldn't have bought a front foot. I know, because I worked the deal. Don't mention it. He is keeping it still for reasons of his own that I don't understand, and I know that he is picking up lots here and there wherever he can get them. That's why he helped many a starving fellow to get out of town, and in that way assisted in decreasing the population. But he said that's all right. 'Fellows,' he said, 'that come here to do nothing but wait for a rise on a piece of ground ain't no good anyhow,' and blame me if I don't think he's O. K. on that proposition."

"He has half seriously and half jokingly said to me, several times, that he expected to need my services as consulting attorney pretty soon," Mr. Campbell confided.

"And blow me for a windmill," the major exclaimed, "if he didn't tell me that he wanted these same club rooms for his private offices. But Jack's a joker as well as a mighty smart fellow and a jolly good one. Visionary, though, old man—visionary as sure's you're born. That's the only trouble with Jack, he's visionary."

They closed and locked the main door of the club house and descended the staircase, having arranged to meet at the Woodworth house office at eight o'clock that

evening to call on Duncan, the invalid, and when they had reached the first floor the major declared with some vehemence:

"If I had to go up there often I would insist upon an 'alleviator.'"

"More puns like that and you'll soon be on the lift."

"Au revoir, major."

"Good-bye, Cam."

CHAPTER XVII.

"The Kicker" Again.

Big, warning drops, like skirmishers
  Rattle amid the bowers;
The wind weeps through the pines and firs
  In stillicides of showers;
I sit in the hut and harken
  To the voices of the storm
And I watch the mountain darken
  While I keep thy memory warm.

—Miner's Memory.

It was verily a winter of discontent that was drawing on. Overhead lowering clouds, sending down rain. Rain, continually rain. While on the deserted streets of St. Movadu nothing could be seen save a semi-occasional electric car, a disconsolate and lonesome looking straggler of the human species; now and then a wet, bedraggled dog. The latter never seemed to be absent from the scene; for in a way, the saying of old holds good as well toward a town as toward mankind, the dogs increase with its poverty.

In this winter of discontent one afternoon that was blustering and cold, with a raw wind blowing off the bay, and continual showers swishing against the windward side of the houses, a knot of men were standing inside the front doorway of Kingsbury's saloon moodily looking up and down the deserted streets from over the top of the ever-present screen.

The place did not bear any appearance of bustle and spirit. All that had long since departed. So would have Kingsbury himself, but for the fact that what he possessed on earth, himself and family included, was tied up in his business, which consisted of the little remnant of trade that pertained to his saloon and its fixtures. The remainder of his fortune lay buried in the town lots, of which he was the owner, in St. Movadu. To be sure the massive safe that he had bought in the days of the boom, and which had many times held small fortunes of cash, deposited by the real estate men in neighboring offices after banking hours, still contained a large bundle of I. O. U.'s for the ever-ready tens and twenties lent "until morning" in the good days.

Lacy once remarked that if Kingsbury should ever be advised to travel for his health he could do no better than

to take that bundle and start out in search of the men whose signatures were represented there, with the full assurance that he would hit all the four corners of the globe in his search.

The side door was suddenly pushed open, in an aggressive manner, and while the loungers turned about to see who came, a man with the cape of his coat over his head, and a badly demoralized umbrella in his hand, blew in. After unsuccessfully struggling to close the umbrella he threw it in a corner with an expression of despair, and turned toward the front of the room, disclosing the features of Mr. James Hiram Young.

"Huh," he growled with an expression more discontented than usual, "who but a driveling idiot would stay in such a place as this? I wish I could get my hands on the man who wrote about the Italian climate of this country."

"Hello, Young."

"How are ye, Jim Hiram?"

"How goes it, old man?" came from the crowd.

Kingsbury leaned back against the inside of the bar watching Young with an expression on his face that was difficult to analyze.

"What do you stay here for, anyway?" he asked. "It rather seems to me that if I had as much to kick about as you can always find, I would remove the light of my countenance to some more favored community."

This provoked a laugh from the men about the room, while Young's face took on even a deeper expression of disgust.

"You fellows give me a pain," he growled. "Here you are, all of you, standing around here doing nothing but watching this town going to the devil. If you had any life in your blamed skins you would have got out of here long ago; or else done something, to keep things up a little bit. What did I tell you a year ago, gentlemen, when you were talking about a thousand dollars a front foot for lots on the avenue here. You were all idiots, gentlemen—that's what I said—and I struck it plumb."

"See here, Hiram," spoke up one of the men, "do you know I think this town has a Jonah—or a hoodoo—and I'm not far from right in thinking he is a man about your size. What did you ever do, when money was as plenty as rain is now; when everybody had it; and when you got a whack at it, too? What did you do except sit

around and growl, and back-cap every play you could with that kick of yours? What did you—"

"Hold on there, suh," Hiram broke in; "didn't I tell the truth? Didn't it pan out just as I said it would? Haven't all you gentlemen lost what money you put into this deal? And ain't you standing around here, suh, just looking for a chance to get away?"

"Well, then, Hiram," queried one of the men, "what are you still blowing away about? Why don't you sometimes let up? You ought to be satisfied. It has come out as you said, and even if you were the original Jonah yourself, things couldn't suit you better."

"Say, mer son, don't get too fresh. You might get swallowed like Jonah was," said Young, and his face took on a look that boded ill to anyone who might go too far.

"Don't be a whale," said one young fellow that Young was very fond of, and who patted "the kicker" familiarly on the shoulder.

This somewhat mollified Jeems Hiram, and before he could frame a good humored reply a hearty laugh came from the doorway between the front and rear parts of the

establishment, where stood a young man calmly smoking and evidently enjoying the scene.

He nodded to Kingsbury and the men collectively, and stepping forward said:

"Pardon me for interrupting you, gentlemen, but won't you join me in a smile? This is the first sign of life I have seen since I struck St. Movadu this morning."

The invitation was readily accepted. Filling their glasses the men tossed off their drinks with a nod toward the stranger, and the conventional "how."

"You'll pardon my breaking in on you," he remarked, "but man is a gregarious animal, and I never was so lonesome in my life. Struck here this morning hoping to sell a big bill of goods, and found no one to sell to. Here I am, till the boat goes this evening, stranded on a wet and desolate shore. When I was here eighteen months ago you were lively enough. I sold a bill of two thousand dollars in an hour to one dealer—now I can't even find the man, much less his store."

"What line are you in?" asked Kingsbury.

"Furniture," he replied. "I travel for a Chicago house, and this is my second trip to the coast. But what is the

trouble here? What has become of the people? Where is the business I saw when I was here before?"

That was Jeems Hiram's chance.

To get hold of a real fresh subject upon whom he could pour all his pessimistic theories, was rarely vouchsafed him nowadays, and it was needless to say he grasped the opportunity with a suddenness that jarred.

"Lemme tell you, suh," Mr. Young said. "It's about this way, suh. These Land Company gentlemen came in here; bought a lot of land from old Duncan; advertised all over the country what a wonderful place this was, suh; got suckers here in herds; sold 'em lots for five hundred dollahs a foot that ain't wuth five dollahs an acre; pocketed the bundle, suh, and then told the poor deluded devils to go right on living. Told them they wouldn't charge them anything for the air they breathed, and that they could walk up and down the streets without paying a cent. They never started a factory or a farm, suh, and there's nothin' for most of the suckers to do now by which they can keep on eatin'. The most of 'em got tired out and disgusted, so they flew away, as well as they could—them that could git away; and the Land Com-

pany scoops in the lots again on the un-paid contract. That's what's the matter, suh."

"Sorry to hear it," replied the drummer. "This place strikes me as the best chance on the coast for a town, and it has been much spoken of in the east. Pardon me if I seem too curious, but do you own much property here?"

Hiram glared; while a subdued snicker ran around the room.

"Me, suh? Me buy any such stuff as this? Well, I should think not. Not if he knows himself does Jeems Hiram get mixed up in a deal like this. When I was a young man I larned something that has always stood me in good turn; and that was never to play against another man's game."

"Oh, I see," said Mr. Drummer; "you are like the chorus in a Greek play. You just stand around on the back of the stage and come in once in awhile with advice and admonition."

"You can bet your life on that," responded Mr. Young, "but lemme tell you, the time is coming after this place is rid of all the shams, shoddyism, booming and real estate trickery, that fortunately are fast going, St. Movadu will

be the best town and the biggest one on the Pacific coast."

At this unwonted and optimistic expression of Mr. Jeems Hiram Young, who had been so long known as "the kicker" the crowd exhibited in various ways their well warranted astonishment.

"Join me again, please," said the commercial angel, motioning toward the bar. They joined him.

And the angel flew away.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A Wedding.

So long as truth shall live, and song shall tell
His name is thinè, and thou shalt wear it well,
Thy beauty and thy grace.
And from his hand, as master at the feast,
He'll give thee glowing days from out the east,
To light thy lovely face.

—*Tacoma.*

When Arthur Campbell and Major Stamina reached Duncan's rooms at the Woodworth that evening, as agreed, they found the apartments presenting an appearance very different from that of the room of a sick man. On the contrary the place bore a cheerful aspect as did the persons collected there.

A gentle and tasteful woman's touch was upon everything; an air of neatness—not too neat, but just neat enough—pervaded the place.

With the simplest contrivances, art had assumed a presence in the room, mingled with an atmosphere of clean Bohemianism.

Ada Benson's kind and loving hand had touched cur-

tains and draperies in the deft and sweetly effective way that only a true woman's soul and taste can suggest, and the vase of rich roses, pinks and pansies, whose perfume redoled the apartments, had been placed upon the mantle by her. The general arrangement of things, beyond the mere cleaning work, done by chambermaids, was hers. Even the fleecy, and comfortable, and handsome woolen robe, trimmed at cuffs and collar in purple silk, that enveloped old Dan Duncan's feeble form as he reposed in an ample arm chair, was the handiwork of this refined and womanly woman. The little organ that Ada or Jack often played upon and sang with, to soothe the old man, had been placed there by Lacy, and the banjo with small coins set under the feet of the bridge to soften the twanging of the strings, was Jack's, and with that instrument he sometimes sang the plaintive and minor songs of the Old South to please the invalid.

Campbell and Stamina met there, upon their arrival, Ada and Jack and two doctors—one a doctor of medicine and the other of divinity. They were Dr. Price, who was still in charge of what was left of the tabernacle flock, and Dr. Somerset, both men of breadth and brains in their callings.

The clergyman was one who did not preach for the sake of proving himself so brilliant and "fashionable" that he would get the loud "call" of a largely increased salary somewhere else, but soulfully and manfully pursued his calling as an humble follower of the Nazarene, and while he taught charity he practiced also that saving virtue, without which "all is as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." When he went to visit Dan Duncan, it was not to fill the invalid's rooms with dolor and melancholy, but to cheer with the hope of a future "beyond the range," and to talk with him in pleasant ways upon any subject that the old man trended toward, or along the delightful paths of thought where he, as a man of large and varied information, could lead the old man.

The medical man was much like the clergyman, generally, in the matter of breadth and liberality. He was one who called a mustard plaster by its name, to his patients, and without the desire to mystify the ignorant. He told them that such a plaster would burn and "make red" the skin; instead of speaking of it as a "rubefacient." He knew that the simplest things and the simplest words were best in his practice. Though, among his scientific brethren, in their conventions or other convocations, he

was as able as any of them, in the application of big-sounding technicalities to all things, from materia medica, through diagnosis, prognosis and symptoms, to practical anatomy and even medical jurisprudence. He knew and admitted that there was much of charlatanism in the practice of medicine, in all the schools, but held for the science of surgery as a positive one, and as an art that outvies that of the sculptor or limner. He was deep in its mysteries and was blessed with those powerful aids of surgery, the hand of a woman, the heart of a lion and the eye of an eagle.

Jack Lacy had been wise enough to surround the old man with such people, his gentle and beautiful sweetheart and these men who did not always "talk shop," but who could minister to the mind as well as to the soul and body. It was such a company as this that Stamina and Campbell found. And what a glorious company of friends they were.

The old man was glad to have them, and after pleasant and familiar greetings all around, some music, and general conversation upon the subjects that all were interested in, old Duncan signified that he desired to tell something important of which he wished them to be wit-

nesses. Seating themselves conveniently, with Jack and Ada on either side of him, the woman caressing the old man's thin hand, he said to the lawyer:

"In addition to my property in St. Movadu, the deeds for which are in that little box," pointing to the japanned chest that stood on a table near by, "worthless as they may be," he continued, "there are certificates of deposit for $90,000, and with them my will, that gives the whole kit and bilin' to Mr. Jack Lacy here, suh, and my daughter Miss Ada Benson here, suh."

Such a look of astonishment as that which took possession of all the other faces present, is seldom seen. But it was one of delighted astonishment, and Ada gently folded her arms about the old man's neck and head, enveloping him in such a way that his further speech was stopped for a moment, and he placed his feeble arms around the slender waist of his daughter.

We will not attempt to describe the scene that was presented for a few moments; the congratulations; the tears of joy; the air of exceeding satisfaction that took possession of all. But while it seemed so strange, no one had the slightest doubt of the truthfulness of the old man's claim upon the girl as to their relationship.

Then the old man told his story, which was in effect just as has been told in this true chronicle. Though he did not mention the faithlessness of his wife and the death of her paramour.

"My real name," he said, "is Daniel Benson, not Duncan. When I left home I had good cause, and it was fittin' to my safety to change my name. Ada was then a mere toddler, and to leave her gave me the worst pain of it all, though it pooty nigh broke my heart to have to go. I come to this place by degrees, and you all know the rest. The papers in the box will prove everything all skookum. Ada's mother died when my daughter was little—I hope it warn't through any doin's of mine—and her uncle, an Ingeaner, took her and done for her the right part. I leave it to her and Jack to do right by him and his'n.

"They are goin' to git married, Jack and Ada, and I'm glad of it. That's the reason I will 'em my stuff, and I hope it will be more of a blessin' to them than it has ever been to me, though I never had a slippery dollar in my life, nor nothin' else that I didn't git square."

The box and its contents were, after the proper inspection by all present, turned over to Lawyer Campbell, and he, with Major Stamina and Dr. Price retired from

the room and took their way down town.

Dr. Somerset remained to keep the old man company while Jack escorted Ada home to procure some necessary night apparel and toilet fixtures, after which they returned, and until her father's death, which occurred a few weeks afterward, the young lady occupied a room adjoining that of the old man. She loved him now more than ever, since their relationship had been revealed; the fact seemed to have astonished her less than it did the others, for she had from the first been strangely drawn toward this somewhat uncouth old man by, perhaps, the psychological force that has been often known to assert itself under similar circumstances.

So it was arranged, and one day, about a week after the scene described in the first part of this chapter, the wedding took place in Benson's rooms, witnessed by a few friends, among them Major Stamina, Campbell and Dr. Somerset. Dr. Price officiated and Benson gave away the bride.

The happy couple took up their residence temporarily at the Hotel Woodworth, sweethearts wedded and sweethearts ever after.

Thus for once the course of true love ran smooth.

CHAPTER XIX.

"The Colossus."

The rarest of the glistening gems
That deck the city's brow—
The brightest in her diadem
Is this we're setting now.
And he who gave the temple name
Shall crown the beauteous queen,
And coming years shall sing his fame
And keep his memory green.

—*A Modern Temple.*

Old Dan Benson was thereafter the happiest invalid known to history. He sat day after day in his big arm chair, tenderly watched, comforted and ministered to by his gentle and loving daughter and his little less gentle and loving son-in-law. He heard with closed eyes and an expression of quiet pleasure upon his face, the voice of his daughter in converse and song.

Jack's banjo "Harp of the South," with the plantation songs the young man sang, carried him back to the home of his youth, till he, in fancy, sat again in the doorway of

the house where he was born, or by its great hearthstone, and heard the drone of the spinning-wheel, or rambled among the summer-clothed woods, or gathered the yellow paw-paws, and caught 'possums that hung caudal-pendant to the boughs of trees, in, or close to those luscious orchards.

One evening, within the month that comprised the scenes of the unfolding of Benson's secret and the wedding, Jack and Ada had been softly singing together at the little organ, and they ceased when they thought the old man had fallen asleep. Approaching him to more comfortably adjust the clothing and wraps about him, they found he had fallen asleep, indeed, but it was the sleep that knows no waking this side of the Great Unknown.

Poor, old Dan Benson had gone beyond the memories that give pain or pleasure; far away had his spirit taken flight, and upon the dead face there yet lingered a smile that was the token of the blissfulness of his last moments.

Ada fell upon her knees at the feet of her dead father and sobbed with the grief of a loving daughter who had been so long bereft of parental care and affection, but who had just found, for a little while, all the deep and

tender love of a father, uncouth though that father was, but none the less appreciative of her, and now taken away forever.

Gently did her husband raise the sweet wife and grief-stricken daughter, after a few minutes, and he led her away to her own apartments, to remain until he could have the proper steps taken for the care of what was left on earth of that frail tenement that had so long held within in the quiet, unobtrusive, self-sacrificing and yet manly soul of the Tennessean; one who had lost his own wife in the bitterest way, and with her the childish love and his own care of their little one, a daughter found at last in the strong and beautiful woman who had eased his evening hours to the shores of that bright river that runs this side of the flowering meadows and fair fields, whose dews are the balsams of eternity.

The funeral of Daniel Benson was as imposing as St. Movadu, in its stricken condition, could make it. Dead, he was the hero of the day. Every civic society in the city turned out to do his memory honor. The ranks were decimated by absentees, but a nucleus of each was in the cortege. There had been no effort on the part of the immediate friends of Benson to have such a demonstration,

but as it was spontaneous and evidently sincere, it was allowed to proceed, and thus, followed by nearly every adult and many of the children of the city, the body was borne to the little cemetery on the hill and there deposited to rest until the last great day, when the heavens shall roll back as a scroll, the trump of the archangel shall sound, and Jehovah in all His unspeakable power and glory shall appear to judge the quick and the dead.

Jack Lacy did not wait long for a more convenient time, nor did he ask aid from those who did honors with banners, and regalia, and a procession, to mark the spot where the pioneer was laid, but proceeded at once to have erected above the grave, a plain marble monument, upon which was engraved the name of Daniel Benson with the date of his birth and death and the words:

"He was the pioneer of St. Movadu."

Lacy meant that those words should mean more in the future than then.

During all this time Lacy had not been inactive with all his increasing interests. He developed his gold mine that was now producing handsomely. His great and growing fortune was carefully and systematically placed where it would do the most good and to be held in re-

serve until the "hard times" should blow over, that had been inaugurated by the failure of the Baring Brothers, and had continued to increase, until it seemed that the world was bankrupt.

To use a western phrase, the west was "whip-sawed through the deal," and this continued several years, until not only St. Movadu was a town of shreds and patches, the pallid ghost of a city, but every city and town on the Pacific coast was seriously and almost ruinously depressed in a business way.

Then came strikes and boycotts, the march of the commonwealers; more strikes—the throes of the people in deep distress.

At last there came a time when flesh and blood could stand it no longer. The people spoke, through press and forum, on the streets and through the pulpit—the mighty vox populi—and as if in echo, came the awful Vox Dei, appalling the worshippers of the golden calf, who seized their yellow god and fled to where they could worship it without danger from the people of America; legislators were brought to a sense of right and justice, and a fear of the people that overcame the love of lucre fell upon them.

The repentance for them was too late, however, for the

people chose truer men than many who had been chosen before.

Through these sterling men, American independence was again declared. Independence of foreign control through commercial and financial influences. The nations were told that they should take the money that the government of the United States guaranteed or they could keep the goods they desired to sell.

At first such governments threatened that they would buy nothing from this country, but our wise statesmen asked them if they had ever bought a pound of anything from us that they did not very much want, and they could but answer "No."

"There is only one thing men ever buy that they do not need," Jack Lacy was wont to say, "and that is too much whisky. Nations are not even so foolish as men about that. They do not buy what they have no use for, or that they cannot re-sell, at a profit, to their own people."

The new order of things brought prosperity rapidly to the whole of the American nation. With the increase of money it came to pass that men preferred to own property —mills, manufactories, farms, homes, cattle. Everything

was worth more than money and the production of everything that men could use for comfort, luxury or pleasure, was done in America, and rail and sail were kept busy transporting to and fro, hither and yon, the products of millions of hands; the fullness of the earth, of the forests, of every possible resource, and foremost among the busiest and most prosperous of all the states, in all of this era of prosperity, was the grand young commonwealth of Washington.

Here were such forests of cedar, fir, spruce and hemlock as are not known to exist so extensively elsewhere, on the face of the earth; mountains of iron ore, and vast treasures of coal unsurpassed in the world; deposits of gold and silver in the mountains beyond the wildest dreams of men, when these mines shall have been fully developed; agricultural, horticultural and general resources the greatest under the skies; climate of perennial joy and a scenery the grandest poem that was ever sung to the full diapason of nature's mighty organ, whose pipes are these canyons and gorges and eternally snow-capped mountains.

These were the attractions for capital and energy and enterprise, and they drew a mighty army of workers and

the employers of work, and the vast area of Washington and all the Pacific northwest became as a crowded human hive, busy, earnest and happy.

Lacy had used his gold to assist in developing good will, as well as in other ways. He had all along been mindful of the charities, those that can overlook a brother's fault, and those that can fill a brother's stomach and keep him warm. He had built cosy cottages on many of his lots in St. Movadu. Sometimes they were terraced tenements that were rented at reasonable prices to his employees as they came. He established numerous manufacturing and producing enterprises, among them a great sawmill for making the best lumber at the least possible cost; a tub and barrel factory to work up the unequalled cedar that stood in seemingly inexhaustible forests upon thousands of acres near St. Movadu. He built a blast furnace to produce iron, and a smelter to reduce silver and gold ores, and at the head, as chief superintendent of all these enterprises, next to Mr. Lacy himself, stood Major Stamina with his offices in the rooms of the old Ajax club, approached by the "alleviator," for Lacy had long ago purchased the entire building and was using it as his general headquarters.

With Lacy's enterprise, and the return of good times, St. Movadu awoke once again. The docks were crowded more than they had ever been, in the old boom days, with vessels from every coast and port.

A transcontinental railway, a direct thoroughfare of commerce across the North American continent, had made its terminus at St. Movadu and a line of great and gallant steamers had been established to run to the terminus of the Siberian railway on the Asiatic coast.

The narrowing, as toward the point of a horn, of the Pacific ocean northward, made the trip across the Pacific from St. Movadu to Vladisvostock many hundred miles nearer than by the old routes of steamers. Thus the ocean trade of America, with Asia, and much of Europe and Africa, was largely transferred to the North Pacific ocean, where a vast fleet of American ships were engaged. Russia also had her fleet of merchant ships there, and Great Britain was forced for the protection of her own commerce to enter into the rivalry. All this attracted, like butterflies, many vessels of other nations. Travelers found this the quickest and safest route to the capitals of Europe, and westward the tourists of the nation took their course to find the east.

The words of Benton, the statesman, were verified, when in the senate chamber nearly half a century ago, he pointed toward the west and said: "There lies the east; there lies India."

St. Movadu became the depot of American trade with Asia and the transit port for Asia's trade with America. The city grew with a wondrous growth. Its business houses rose in vast and almost palatial piles, and Lacy's wealth became enormous, almost beyond compute, but with it all he was the same happy-hearted, poetic, tender and chivalrous man that he had been when he was only "Jack Lacy, Bohemian," and his Ada, the acknowledged, ideal of a gentle and womanly woman, was his partner in mighty and pervading charities, as well as the queenly head of his elegant though simply conducted home establishment.

As St. Movadu was growing to be the mighty metropolis of the Northwest Pacific coast, Lacy proceeded to the erection of the one monument, designed by himself, to be one that would give aid and comfort to thousands and be an architectural crown of the city he had redeemed.

On the square he had reserved, opposite the Hotel Woodworth, now in the very business heart of the city, with Major Stamina in charge of the construction, he proceeded to build a mighty structure that should occupy the entire space. "The Colossus," he called it, in honor of Opie Read's novel of that name, and it arose with a great dome at the center, while spires and minarets decorated its corners and the archways to its arcades ran through its first floor like the arms of a Latin cross, east and west, north and south. Of stone, iron and glass it became a grand mart of retail trade, in every line possible and there was a theatre in the dome, reached by many elevators of great carrying capacity. The theatre was provided with the most elaborate orchestrion that genius could produce, and that gave forth the truest music befitting secular or sacred events, for the theatre was also designed to be used as the starting point of a universal religion based upon the "Golden Rule," that should be for the healing of the nations.

Major Stamina was installed, because he was a just, generous and noble man, at the head of all this, and when

everything was in perfect running order, he and his wife and Ted, Jack, Ada, Campbell and the two doctors made a trip to the old world to see its wonders.

And they sat in the shadow of the silent Sphinx.

(THE END.)

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